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A. S. Byatt

On the Day that E. M. Forster Died

THIS IS A STORY about writing. It is a story about a writer who believed, among other things, that the time for writing about writing was past. "Our art", said T.S. Eliot, "is a substitute for religion and so is our religion." The writer in question, who, on the sunday day in 1970 when this story takes place, was a middle-aged married woman with three small children, had been brought up on art about art which saw art also as salvation. *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Death in Venice, A la Recherche du Temps Perdu.* Or, more English and moral, more didactic, D. H. Lawrence. "The novel is the highest form of human expression yet attained." "The novel is the one bright book of life." Mrs Smith was afraid of these books, and was also naturally sceptical. She did not believe that life aspired to the condition of art, or that art could save the world from most of the things that threatened it, endemically or at moments of crisis. She had written three brief and elegant black comedies about folly and misunderstanding in sexual relationships, she had sparred with and loved her husband, who was deeply interested in international politics and the world economy, and only intermittently interested in novels. She had three children, who were interested in the television, small animals, model armies, other small children, the sky, death and occasional narratives and paintings. She had a cleaning lady, who was interested in wife-battery and diabetes and had that morning opened a button-through dress to display to Mrs Smith a purple and chocolate and gold series of lumps and swellings across her breasts and belly. Mrs Smith's own life made no sense to her without art, but she was disinclined to believe in it as a cure, or a duty, or a general necessity. Nor did she see the achievement of the work of art as a paradigm for the struggle for life, or virtue. She had somehow been inoculated with it, in the form of the novel, before she as a moral being had had anything to say to it. It was an addiction. The bright books of life were the shots in the arm, the warm tots of whisky which kept her alive and conscious and lively. Life itself was related in complicated ways to this addiction. She often asked herself, without receiving any satisfactory answer, why she needed it, and why this form of it? Her answers would have appeared to Joyce, or Mann, or Proust to be frivolous. It was because she had become sensuously excited in early childhood by Beatrix Potter's sentence-structure, or Kipling's adjectives. It was because she was a voyeur and liked looking in through other people's windows on warmer, brighter worlds. It was because she was secretly deprived of power, and liked to construct other worlds in which things would be as she chose, lovely or horrid. When she took her art most seriously it was because it focused her curiosity about things that were not art; society, education, science, death. She did a lot of research for her little books, most of which never got written into them, but it satisfied her somehow. It gave a temporary coherence to her perception of things.

So this story, which takes place on the day when she decided to commit herself to a long and complicated novel, would not have pleased her. She never wrote about writers. Indeed, she wrote witty and indignant reviews of novels which took writing for a paradigm of life. She wrote about the metaphysical claustrophobia of the Shredded Wheat Box on the Shredded Wheat Box getting smaller *ad infinitum*. She liked things to happen. Stories, plots. History, facts. If I do not entirely share her views, I am much in sympathy with them. Nevertheless, it seems worth telling this story about writing, which is a story, and does have a plot, is indeed essentially plot, overloaded with plot, a paradigmatic plot which, I believe, takes it beyond the narcissistic consideration of the formation of the writer, or the aesthetic closure of the mirrored mirror.

ON A SUMMER DAY IN 1970, then, Mrs Smith, as was her habit when her children were at school, was writing in the London Library. (She preferred to divide art and life. She liked to write surrounded by books, in a closed space where books were what mattered most. In her kitchen she thought about cooking and cleanliness, in her living-room about the children's education and different temperaments, in bed about her husband, mostly.) She had various isolated ideas for things she might write about. There was a story which dealt with the private lives of various people at the time of the public events of the Suez landings and the Russian invasion of Hungary. There was a tragi-comedy about a maverick realist painter in a Fine Art Department dedicated to hard-edge abstract work. There was a tale based, at a proper moral distance, on her husband's accounts, from his experience in his Government Department, of the distorting effects on love, marriage

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and the family of the current complicated British immigration policy. There was a kind of parody of *The Lord of the Rings* which was designed to show why that epic meant so much to so many and to wind its speech into incompatible "real" modern events. None of these enterprises attracted her quite enough. She sat on her not comfortable hard chair at the library table with its peeling leather top and looked from shelved dictionaries to crimson carpet to elegantly sleeping elderly gentlemen in leather armchairs to the long windows on to St James's Square. One of these framed a clean, large Union Jack, unfurled from a flagpole on a neighbouring building. The others were filled by the green tossing branches of the trees in the Square and the clear blue of the sky. (Her metabolism was different in summer. Her mind raced clearly. Oxygen made its way to her brain.)

It was suddenly clear to her that all her beginnings were considerably more interesting if they were part of the same work than if they were seen separately. The painter's aesthetic problem was more complicated in the same story as the civil servant's political problem, the Tolkien parody gained from being juxtaposed, or interwoven with a cast of Hungarian refugees, intellectuals and Old Guard, National Servicemen at Suez and Angry Young Men. They *were* all part of the same thing. They were part of what she knew. She was a middle-aged woman who had led a certain, not very varied but perceptive, life, who had lived through enough time to write a narrative of it. She sat mute and motionless, looking at the trees and the white paper, and a fantastically convoluted improbably possible plot reared up before her like a snake out of a magic basket, like ticker-tape, or football results out of the television teleprinter.

It would have to be a very long book. Proust came to mind, his cork-lined room stuffed with the transformation of life into words, everything he knew, feathers on hats, Zeppelins, musical form, painting, vice, reading, snobbery, sudden death, slow death, food, love, indifference, the telephone, the table-napkin, the paving-stone, a lifetime.

Such moments are—if one allows oneself to know that they have happened—as terrible as falling in love at first sight, as the shock of a major physical injury, as gaining or losing huge sums of money. Mrs Smith was a woman who was capable, she believed, of not allowing herself to know that they had happened. She was a woman who could, and on occasion did, successfully ignore love at first sight, out of ambition before her marriage, out of moral terror after it. She sat there in the sunny library and watched the snake sway and the tape tick, and the snake-dance grew more, not less, delightful and powerful and complicated. She remembered Kékulé seeing the answer to a problem of solid-state physics in a metaphysical vision of a snake eating its tail in the fire. Why does condensation of thought have such authority? Like warning, or imperative, dreams. Mrs Smith could have said at any time that of course all her ideas were part of a whole, they were all hers, limited by her history, sex, language, class, education, body and energy. But to experience this so sharply, and to experience it as intense pleasure, to know limitation as release and power, was outside Mrs Smith's pattern. She had probably been solicited by such aesthetic longings before. And rejected them. Why else be so afraid of the bright books?

She put pen to paper then, and noted the connections she saw between the disparate plots, the developments that seemed so naturally to come to all of them, branching and flowering like speeded film, seed to shoot to spring to summer from this new form. She wrote very hard, without looking up, for maybe an hour, doing more work in that time than in times of lethargy or distraction she did in a week. A week? A month. A year even, though work is of many kinds and she had the sense that this form was indeed a growth, a form of life, her life, its own life.

Then, having come full circle, having thought her way through the planning, from link to link back to the original perception of linking that had started it all, she got up, and went out of the Library, and walked. She was overexcited, there was too much adrenalin, she could not be still.

SHE WENT UP AND DOWN Jermyn Street, through the dark doorway, the windowed umber quiet of St James's Piccadilly, out into the bright churchyard with its lettered stones smoothed and erased by the passage of feet. Along Piccadilly, past Fortnum & Mason's, more windows full of decorous conspicuous consumption, down an arcade bright with windowed riches like Aladdin's cave, out into Jermyn Street again. Everything was transformed. Everything was hers, by which phrase she meant, thinking fast in orderly language, that at that time she felt no doubt about being able to translate everything she saw into words, her own words, English words, English words in 1970, with their limited and meaningful and endlessly rich histories, theirs as hers was hers. This was not the same as Adam in Eden naming things, making nouns. It was not that she said nakedly as though for the first time, tree, stone, grass, sky, nor even, more particularly, omnibus, gaslamp, culottes. It was mostly adjectives. Elephantine bark, eau-de-Nil paint on Fortnum's walls, Nile-water green, a colour fashionable from Nelson's victories at the time when this street was formed, a colour for old drawing-rooms or, she noted in the chemist's window, for a new eyeshadow, Jeepers Peepers, Occidental Jade, what nonsense, what vitality, how lovely to know. Naming with nouns, she thought absurdly, is the language of poetry, There is a Tree, of many One. The Rainbow comes and goes. And Lovely is the Rose. Adjectives go with the particularity of long novels. They limit nouns. And at the same time give them energy. Dickens is full of them. And Balzac. And Proust.

Nothing now, she knew, whatever in the moral abstract she thought about the relative importance of

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writing and life, would matter to her more than writing. This illumination was a function of middle age. Novels—as opposed to lyrics, or mathematics—are essentially a middle-aged form. The long novel she meant to write acknowledged both the length and shortness of her time. It would not be History, nor even a history, nor certainly, perish the thought, her history. Autobiographies tell more lies than all but the most self-indulgent fiction. But it would be written in the knowledge that she had lived through and noticed a certain amount of history. A war, a Welfare State, the Rise (and fall) of the Meritocracy, European unity, little England, Equality of Opportunity, Comprehensive Schooling, Women's Liberation, the Death of the Individual, the Poverty of Liberalism. How lovely to trace the particular human events that might chart the glories and inadequacies, the terrors and absurdities, the hopes and fears of those words. And biological history too. She had lived now through birth, puberty, illness, sex, love, marriage, other births, other kinds of love, family and kinship and local manifestations of these universals, Drs Spock, Bowlby, Winnicott, Flower Power, gentrification, the transformation of the adjective gay into a politicised noun. How extraordinary and interesting it all was, how adequate language turned out to be, if you thought in terms of long flows of writing, looping tightly and loosely round things, joining and knitting and dividing, or, to change the metaphor, a Pandora's box, an Aladdin's cave, a bottomless dark bag into which everything could be put and drawn out again, the same and not the same. She quoted to herself, in another language, "*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita.*" Another beginning in a middle. Mrs Smith momentarily Dante, in the middle of Jermyn Street.

WHERE IS THE PLOTTING and over-plotting I wrote of? It is coming, it is proceeding up Lower Regent Street, it is stalking Mrs Smith, a terror by noonday. It is not, aesthetic pride compels me to add, a straying terrorist's bullet, or anything contrived by the IRA. Too many stories are curtailed by these things, in life and in literature.

IN THE INTERIM, MRS SMITH read the newspaper placards. "Famous Novelist Dies." She bought an early paper and it turned out that it was E. M. Forster who was dead. He was, or had been, ninety-one. A long history. Which, since 1924, he had not recorded in fiction. "Only connect", he had said, "the prose and the passion." He had been defeated apparently by the attenuation of the world he knew, the deep countryside, life in families in homes, a certain social order. Forster, much more than Lawrence, corresponded to Mrs Smith's ideal of the English novel. He wrote civilised comedy about the value of the individual and his responsibilities: he was aware of the forces that threatened the individual, unreason, belief in causes, political fervour. He believed in tolerance, in the order of art, in recognising the complicated energies of the world in which art didn't matter. In Cambridge, Mrs Smith had had a friend whose window had overlooked Forster's writing-desk. She had watched him pass mildly to and fro, rearranging heaps of papers. Never writing. She honoured him.

She was surprised therefore to feel a kind of quick, delighted, automatic survivor's pleasure at the sight of the placards. "Now", she thought wordlessly, only later, because of the unusual speed and accuracy with which she was thinking, putting it into words, "Now I have room to move, now I can do as I please, now he can't overlook or reject me." Which was absurd, since he did not know she was there, would not have wished to overlook or reject her.

What she meant, she decided, pacing Jermyn Street, was that he was removed, in some important sense, by his death, as a measure. Some obligation she had felt, which tugged both ways, to try to do as well as he did, and yet to do differently from him, had been allayed. Because his work was now truly closed into the past it was now in some sense her own, more accessible to learn from, and formally finished off. She passed the church again, thinking of him, agnostic and scrupulous. She envied him his certainties. She enjoyed her own difference. She thought. "On the day that E. M. Forster died I decided to write a long novel." And heard in the churchyard a Biblical echo. "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord. . . ."

He had written, "The people I respect most behave as if they were immortal and society was eternal. Both assumptions are false: both of them must be accepted as true if we are to keep on eating and working and loving and are to keep open a few breathing holes for the spirit."

MRS SMITH WAS STILL exalted. A consuming passion streamlines everything, like stripes in a rolled ribbon, one weaving: newsprint, smudged black lines on the placard, Wren church, Famine Relief posters, the order of male living in Jermyn Street shop windows, shoes mirror-bright, embroidered velvet slippers, brightly coloured shirts, the cheese shop with its lively smell of decay, Floris the perfumer with the ghost of pot-pourri. And for the ear the organ, heard faintly, playing baroque music. A pocket of civilisation or consumers' display area. She came to Grima the jeweller, a recent extravaganza, expensively primitive, huge, matt, random slabs of flint-like stone, bolted apparently randomly to the shop-frame, like a modern theatre-set for an ancient drama, black and heavy, *Oedipus*, *Lear*, *Macbeth*. And in the interstices of these louring slabs the bright tiny boxes of windows—lined with scarlet kid, crimson silk, vermilion velvet. The jewels were artfully random, not precision polished, but

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fretted, gold and silver, as stone or bone might be by the incessant action of the sea. And the stones—huge, glowing lumpen uneven pearls, a pear-shaped fiery opal, a fall of moonstones like water on gold mail—were both opulent and primitive, set in circlets or torques that might have come from the Sutton Hoo ship, a Pharaoh's tomb, the Museum of Modern Art. Windows, frames, Mrs Smith thought, making metaphors of everything, out of the library window I saw the National Flag and summer trees, in here is the fairy cavern and all the sixties myths, and in the tailor was Forster's Edwardian world of handmade shirts and slippers. The windows order it. But it is not disorderly. Even the *names*—Turnbull and Asser, Floris, Grima, can work in a Tolkien-tale, a realist novel, or a modern fantasy. It is all *there*. There is time.

AND THEN THE MAN, WHO HAD turned the corner into Jermyn Street, plucked her by her sleeve, called her by her name, said how delighted he was to see her. She took time to recognise him: he had aged considerably since they last met. He was not a man she considered herself to know well, though at their rare meetings he behaved, as now, as if they were old and intimate friends. His history, which I shall now tell, was in most ways the opposite of Mrs Smith's, given that most histories of the university-educated English would appear very similar to a creature from another planet or even from Japan, Brazil or Turkey. Mrs Smith and Conrad had been to the same university, attended the same parties, had the same acquaintances and one or two friends in common in the worlds of education and the arts in London in 1970. Conrad had studied psychology whereas Mrs Smith had studied English Literature. He had made passes at Mrs Smith, but he made passes at most people, and Mrs Smith did not see that as a token of intimacy. He had been, and remained, a friend of friends.

In Jermyn Street, as always before he radiated boundless enthusiasm, as though there was no one he would rather have met at that moment, as though chance, or Providence, or God had answered his need, and hers almost certainly too, by bringing them haphazardly together. He leaped about on the pavement, a heavy man with a new, pear-shaped belly propped on his jeans like a very large egg on an inadequate egg-cup. He had a jean jacket over a cotton polo-neck through which rusty specks and wires of hair pierced here and there. He leaped with a boyish eagerness, although he was a middle-aged man with a bald brow and crown, and long, kinked, greasy fringes of hair over his collar. She particularly noticed the hair in the first moments. As an undergraduate he had had a leonine bush of it which gave him presence.

"Come and have a cup of coffee", he said, "I have so much to tell you. You are the ideal person."

IN THE PAST SHE WOULD, out of fear, or distaste for being cornered and having her knee pressed or stroked, have refused this invitation. In the past, she had refused more of his invitations than she had accepted. There were resilient moods in which the writer in her was prepared to fend off the patting, stroking and breathing for the sake of information Conrad purveyed about things she knew too little about. Psychology, for instance. It was Conrad who had told her about the effects of experiments in total sensory deprivation, men suspended in lightless baths of warm liquid so that sight, and the sense of the body and then the sense of time and the self were annihilated. It was Conrad who had said tht there were unrevealed numbers of volunteer students, whose personalities had disintegrated forever in this bodiless floating. Mrs Smith was curious about what held the personality together, what constituted the self. Conrad, whose life experience was varied, told her also, when she could bear to be told, about forms of bullying and torture, and about experiments on the readiness of ordinary men to inflict pain under orders. Mrs Smith was extensively curious but lacked the journalist's readiness to ask questions. Conrad's talkativeness was, in its way, a godsend.

But on that June day, she went to have coffee because of the music. She felt particularly warm to Conrad because of the music.

THE STORY OF THE MUSIC was, is, a plot almost needing no character. All that need initially be known about Conrad to tell the story of the music is that he was a man of extraordinary nervous, physical and mental energy. He was not still, he did not stop, he was perpetually mobile. He bedded women with an extravagant greed and need which Mrs Smith found sensuously unattractive but interesting to be told about. He had married a rich and beautiful wife, very young, but all other women interested him. He liked activity: he had taken his academic psychological skills into the army, into the prison service, into commerce. He had an interest in advising television advertisers. As I said, he was to Mrs Smith a friend of friends, and in her early days of childbearing she had heard from friends tales of Conrad's restless activity. He had set out and joined in the Hungarian uprising. He had spent his honeymoon in the Ritz, three weeks without getting out of bed, he had been heard of as accompanying a filming expedition to Central New Guinea, to study cannibals, he had several children by actresses, au pair girls, students. He had been very busy. He had had a routine medical examination for a job with another film company working abroad and had been discovered to have tuberculosis. He had been sent to a sanatorium, and the friends had not seen him for several years. His wife had left him. All this filtered through friends to Mrs Smith, quietly running her house, feeding her children, reading George Eliot and Henry James.

In the sanatorium, Conrad had, in his enforced still-

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ness, had a vision. He had seen that his life was finite, that it came only once, that a man must decide what was the most important thing to him and pursue that, and that only, with all his power. The most important thing in life to Conrad was, he decided, music. In the sanatorium that seemed clear to him. When he came out, gaunt and quiet, he had resigned all his lucrative work and had enrolled as a music student, a student of composition. He had married a second quiet wife. Meeting him at that time, a man submitted to a new discipline in middle age for the sake of an ideal vision, Mrs Smith had felt a mixture of envy and cautious scepticism. He was shining with certainty. The routine pass was couched almost as an invitation to a religious laying-on of hands. Mrs Smith rejected it, and went home to a flooded washing-machine, a threatening letter from a released anarchist drug-pusher to her husband, and the reflection that in the past much great art had been produced by the peculiar vitality and vision afforded by TB, which could now of course be cured, to our human gain and aesthetic loss.

SHE HAD SEEN CONRAD ONCE AGAIN between then and now, when he had knocked on her door and said she *must* come to lunch. The lunch had been expensive—mussels, turbot, zabaglione, wine. Mrs Smith had scrutinised Conrad, who ate and drank with passion. He ate all her new potatoes and all his, glistening with Hollandaise sauce, and left an empty sauceboat. He wiped his lips with a damask napkin: his face glistened with exertion and butter: his second wife, he said, had left him, taking the children. He was paying a lot of alimony. He had had a motet played at a Contemporary Music Festival in Leamington Spa. He was working for a cigarette company, devising ways of suggesting that cigarettes produced sexual pleasure, without this being apparent. The decline of lipstick-wearing amongst women made this harder. Once you could use a glamorous scarlet lip, wet-looking. Now it had to be clean and healthy. He wasn't happy about this; he had seen too much in the lung ward in the sanatorium. But there was the alimony. Did she know any good modern love-poems he could set to music? He wanted to write for single voices, very plain. He had met an extraordinary Israeli singer. With an extraordinary range. Did women write love poems? Did she know women ate mussels because they reminded them of sex? Was it the marine smell, or the hint of the embryonic? Would she care for a brandy? An Armagnac? A ticket for Stockhausen at the Festival Hall? The nature of our concept of musical sound, musical form, was being radically changed, as never before. He was engaged, too, in research about how to interest women in fortified wines. Of course, physiologically speaking, they couldn't take much. Up-market port and lemon. Class drink preferences were not wholly determined by money. Would she like a cigar? He rubbed her knee with his. Big and hot. She dodged efficiently.

All the same, there was the music. He had been *in extremis*, and had put music first.

THEY SAT IN FRONT OF CAPPUCCINOS in an unassuming coffee bar. Now she was near him, she saw that he looked ill. There was thick beard stubble, his face was patterned by broken capillary tubes, his eyes were veined, his neck tendons stood out. His shoulders were sprinkled with dandruff and traced by fallen hairs.

"How's the music?" asked Mrs Smith.

"Marvellous. Wonderful. New. Never better. You look radiant. You look *so lovely*. It's *marvellous* to see you, looking so lovely. Not a day older—not a *day*—than when we walked along the Backs together and sat side by side in the University Library."

Mrs Smith did not recall that they had done either of these things. Perhaps her memory—which she must now trust to be so sharp—was at fault.

"I've just been thinking how pleasant it is to be middle-aged."

"You aren't middle-aged. You're as old as you feel. That's true, not just something to say. I'm young, you're young, we can do anything. I've never in my whole life felt so young, so healthy."

There were panels of sweat down his nose, in the crease of his chin, on his clammy brow. The ends of his fingers were dead white and his fingernails had dirt under them. He smelled. Across the new coffee smell he smelled of new sweat and old sweat under it, mortality.

"Tell me how the music is."

"I told you, it's fantasic. Every day, new discoveries. Revolutionary techniques. New machines. A new range of possibilities. I can't get over how *fresh* you look."

Mrs Smith knew that she had grey hairs, a marked fan of lines in her eye-corners, a neck better covered, a body loosened by childbearing. She did not attract wolf-whistles. She was not generally considered to expect or hope that advances would be made.

"Don't say that, I'm thinking how happy I am to be irretrievably middle-aged. Because of time, because I'm *in time*. Listen—I've decided to write a long book—about my time, the time I've lived and won't have again."

It was the first time, possibly, she had volunteered a serious confidence in their acquaintance. It was because of the music.

"By the time we're middle-aged I can tell you they'll have discovered how to arrest the ageing process forever. They're working on it. It'll be quite possible soon to stop death, to stop death in most cases. I assure you, I've gone into it. You deprive the body of the signals—hormone decrease, loss of calcium, those things—that trigger off ageing. There's a political problem, they don't want everyone to know, naturally, they haven't solved the world population problem. But I have my sources of information. You trick your genes

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into working to perpetuate themselves in the body you've got, not a new one. It can be done. I had a vasectomy. No more kids, no more alimony, no more splurging my genes on other beings. Conserve. Perpetuate. Live. Don't talk about middle age."

"But I *like* it." She wanted him, for once, to hear. "I've just discovered I practise a middle-aged art. Spread over time. Time's of the essence."

"There's no such thing as time. Time's an illusion. The new music knows that. It's all in the present. Now. It isn't interested in the past, or in harmony, or in keeping time, in tempo, any of all that. We've broken the idea of time and sequence. We play with the random, the chaotic. Einstein destroyed the illusion of linear time."

"Not biological time", said Mrs Smith, bravely, having heard these arguments before, though not from Conrad.

"Instantaneous and disposable sounds", said Conrad, excited. "Always different, always now. Biological time's an illusion too. Only the more complicated organisms die. Simple cells are immortal. We can reverse that. We must make a better world to live in. That's what matters. We must survive. Can I trust you?"

Mrs Smith lowered her eyelids and said nothing. She expected a sexual confidence.

"I know I can trust you, that's why I met you. These things are not fortuitous. I was followed here. I'm in danger."

MRS SMITH DID NOT KNOW what to do with this introduction of espionage plotting. She continued to look non-committally intelligent, and to say nothing.

"There's a dark man across there, across the street, with an evil umbrella. Don't look now."

Paranoia, said Mrs Smith's mind. "Why?" said Mrs Smith, more neutrally.

"I am carrying", said Conrad, leaning forward across the formica table top, breathing stale smoke and sour fear in her face, "this folder of secret plans. It's a matter of life and death. I've got to get them to the Israeli embassy."

He laid a rubbed and filthy package before her, tied with various kinds of string, sprouting faded edges of xerox paper.

"This may prevent nuclear war. They have a Bomb, you know, they may be driven to let it off. Everyone against them, fighting for survival, history conspiring. . . ."

"I don't think. . . ."

"You don't know. I worked for the British Intelligence, you know. On some very hush-hush research. All those trips to eastern university conferences weren't what they seemed. I know my way around. In Israel everyone's in Intelligence. They have to be. I recognised it in Miriam immediately. I can't get her to trust me. I want the Israelis to accept this. In token of good faith. British good faith."

Mrs Smith was driven to ask, in a small voice, what "this" was, though not, she hoped, as though she really wanted to know. Across the road the man in a dark overcoat lit a cigarette, shifted his umbrella, looked through the café window, looked back at the gentlemen's shirts in their bold colours, scarlet stripes, roseate flowers, black and gold paisley. He did not look the sort of man to wear such shirts.

"The Music Department in this University has made an instrument—constructed a machine—that disintegrates solid bodies with sound waves. By shaking them. Sound broadcast by this instrument at certain frequencies disorientates people completely. Drives them round the bend. Arabs are peculiarly susceptible to sound. They hear a greater frequency range. I'm taking these plans to the Israeli embassy."

"How terrible", said Mrs Smith.

"Of course it's terrible. Life is terrible. Destroy or be destroyed. What I want you to do is keep the duplicate plans safe—just sit here and keep them safe—and if I'm not back in one hour take them to one of these people in the BBC Music Department. The BBC's full of spies. I know them. I have the list."

"Terrible I meant", said Mrs Smith, "to use the music. The *music*. . . ."

He brushed this aside. "I'll give you £100. £500. Just for *half an hour*. As an insurance?"

"I don't want anything to do with it." Mrs Smith stood up. "I don't like it. I'm going."

"Oh no", said Conrad. "Oh no, you don't. You may be part of the plot, after all. You will stay here where I can see you."

He clasped Mrs Smith's wrist. The man on the opposite pavement looked at them again, pulled his hat over his eyes, became absorbed in the contemplation of a pair of black velvet slippers, embroidered with a pair of gold stags' heads. Mrs Smith thought of *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. Her desire to get out of this story, international incident, paranoid fantasy, became overmastering. She tried to pull away.

"I'm going, I'm afraid. I have work to do."

"You can't go out there. Those people have poison-darts in their umbrella-tips. Fatal. No known antidote."

"No, they don't", said Mrs Smith.

Mrs Smith pulled. "You have got to help." She raised her handbag and banged it against Conrad's bald head and red ear. He, breathing loudly, grabbed her crisp white shirt by the collar. Both pulled. The shirt came apart, leaving most of one sleeve and the left front portion in Conrad's hand. The restaurant proprietor, assuming rape, approached from behind the bar. Conrad's parcel fell under the table. As he bent towards it, Mrs Smith, her face scratched, one lace-covered breast exposed, ran out into Jermyn Street, attracting the brief, unsmiling attention of the window-watcher. When she was at the corner of Jermyn Street she heard Conrad's voice, plaintive and wild, "Come back, help me, help me."

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Mrs Smith ran on, down Duke of York Street, along St James's Square, into the solid Victorian mahogany sanctuary of the London Library, which, at its inception, at the behest of Thomas Carlyle, historian and founder member, stocked the fiction of only one writer, George Eliot, who he believed had so deep an insight into the thought and nature of the times that her work was classified, by him, as philosophy.

In the mahogany Ladies' Room, with water from a Victorian brass tap, Mrs Smith mopped her face and wept for the music. She would have to borrow a cardigan to go home respectably. She had lost some virtue. (In the old sense of that word, from the Latin, *virtus*, manliness, worth, power; and in newer ones too.) She was shaken. She was a determined and practical woman and would go back to work, however her elation had been broken.

Conrad was mad. She would not inhabit his plot of deathly music-machines and lethal umbrellas.

How precarious it was, the sense of self in the dark bath of uncertainty, the moment of knowing, the certainty that music is the one thing needful.

"Death destroys a man", said Forster, the liberal humanist, the realist, who died on that day. "The idea of death saves him." It would take more than Conrad's local madness to deflect or deter Mrs Smith.

I HAVE TO RECORD, HOWEVER, that only two weeks later she went to see a surgeon in the Marylebone Road. She had a pain in her side, not much, not a bad pain, a small lump, a hernia.

She had a sort of growth, said the surgeon, a thickening of old scar tissue. He thought it would be better if he took it out.

Not just now, said Mrs Smith. I am busy, I have a lot of work to do, I work best in the summer, it's the school holidays. In the autumn.

Next week, said the surgeon, and added in answer to her unspoken question; it is certainly benign.

This is not what he said to Mr Smith, and indeed, how could he have said with such certainty, before the event, what it was, malignant or benign?

Mrs Smith, during the three weeks that in fact supervened before she entered the hospital, went as usual to the London Library. She stared a lot out of the window and tried to think of short tales, of compressed, rapid forms of writing, in case there was not much time.

Elegy for Extra-Homes

Shabbier grow loved extra-homes, though a new
Arrived dove behind hawthorn flowers crools now,
Now crools again, now again, on first-coming days
Which are grey—if with a blue patch or two, still

Grey, still grey. Paint's worn from woodwork away.
Rust. Now not one key turns easy, not as quickly,
Now holiday's come, are shrubs cut to comfort, gravels
Chemically weeded, whole gardens to rights set more

Or less. But each owner's older: he may—does he know it?—
Soon be sentenced to die. Habit his life
Is. His children—their children—come now no more.
He cleans up. A bonfire. Pink puppets—fire eats

Their features. And cleavers, how insistently cleavers
Climbs in all corners. He's been cut into. He can lift
Nothing. She must lift all. He sleeps after eating. Hell,
Sole hell he fears now, is horribly dying, asking, asking

Well, was it worth it? "It" is that consequential, oddest
Of accidents. "It" equals living, is all he recalls, is
All he's forgotten. Who said to him in his schooling:
Make bad less bad for man, if you can; make good

More good for man, if you can? Who said: In absurdity
Soothe. Soothe, soothe, if you can. As soothed you
Have been? Who said, That is most, though it may not be
All, we being deceivers, in being a man?

Geoffrey Grigson

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Zbigniew Brzezinski

Tragic Dilemmas of Soviet World Power

The Limits of a New-Type Empire

I WANT TO examine in this article the distinctive nature of the Soviet Union as a world power and to try to assess the special character of the Soviet challenge to the international system. The basic theses of my analysis can be stated briefly at the outset:

1. That the expansionism of the Soviet imperial system is a unique organic imperative produced by the sense of territorial insecurity on the part of the system's Great Russian national core;
2. That as a result of the Great Russian stake in the imperial system, a genuine evolution of the Soviet system into more pluralistic forms is not likely in the foreseeable future;
3. That the political priorities and bureaucratic distortions of the Communist system confine the Soviet Union to the role of a one-dimensional military world power;
4. That the Soviets—who now have military global reach but who lack political global grasp—feel themselves both too strong internationally to accommodate to the *status quo* and too weak domestically not to fear it;
5. That as an organically expansionist but one-dimensional military world power, lacking the capacity to effect a genuine revolution in the world system, the Soviet Union is confined to the essentially negative role of disrupter of wider and more cooperative international arrangements;
6. That a major disruption of the international political system could occur as a consequence of Western failure to offset Soviet military power, while not coping effectively with the mushrooming crises in the strategically and geopolitically central zones of the Middle East and Central America.

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1. A Uniquely Organic Imperialism

THE SOVIET UNION is the political expression of Russian nationalism. The Great Russians dominate the multinational Soviet Union, populated by some 270 million people; and through the power and resources of that Union, they dominate in turn a cluster of geographically contiguous states numbering approximately an additional 115 millions of people. In effect, about 135 million Great Russians exercise political control over a political framework that cumulatively encompasses some 385 millions spread over much of the Eurasian continent.

This is not to say that the system is one of simple "national oppression." The Great Russians rule as much by cooptation as by suppression. The historical record of Russian imperial preponderance is replete with examples of successful cooptation, corruption, and integration of foreign élites; of the gradual absorption politically and even culturally of ethnically related peoples; of the creation of a sense of a larger community. None the less, in the background of this process is the reality of Moscow's power, which is applied ruthlessly whenever a given nation chooses to resist domination and especially if it seeks to detach itself from the Russian-dominated larger whole.

The distinctive character of the Russian imperial drive is derived from the interconnection between the militaristic organisation of the Russian society and the territorial imperative which defines its instinct of survival. This has often been noted by both Russian and non-Russian historians alike. From time immemorial Russian society expressed itself politically through a state that was mobilised and regimented along military lines, with the security dimension serving as the central organising impulse. The absence of any clearly definable national boundary made territorial expansion the obvious way of assuring security, with such territorial expansion then breeding new conflicts, new threats, and thus a further expansionary drive. A relentless historical cycle was thus set in motion: insecurity generated expansionism—expansionism

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bred insecurity; insecurity, in turn, would fuel further expansionism.

Russian history is, consequently, a history of sustained territorial expansionism. This sustained expansion from the north-east plains and forests of Muscovy has lasted—almost on a continuous basis—for more than 300 years. It has involved a push westward against major power rivals, resulting in the eventual expulsion of Sweden from east of the Baltic and in the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic. It has involved the persistent drive southward, culminating—in the wake of defeats inflicted on the Ottoman Empire—in the subordination of the Ukrainian Cossacks and the Crimean Tatars and in the absorption of several Caucasian nations and of Moslem Central Asia. It has involved a steady stream of settlers, penal colonists, and military explorers eastward, along the brim of the Chinese empire, all the way to Kamchatka. Such territorial expansion is doubtless—both in scale and in duration—one of the most ambitious examples of a relentless imperial drive in known history.

The Russians have come in this manner to control the world's largest real estate. They do so by inhabiting relatively densely its inner core—the large area known as European Russia—and by settling in smaller but still politically significant numbers in strategically significant colonial outposts in the Baltic region (including Kaliningrad); parts of Byelorussia; East Ukraine; the north-east shore of the Black Sea; large parts of Kazakhstan; and along a long security belt spanning the Trans-Siberian Railroad all the way to the Soviet Far East. The empty vastness of Siberia has thus been effectively sealed off and remains available for gradual colonisation.

In the process, the Russians have come to dominate the weaker peoples inhabiting some of these territories, by subordinating them politically, coopting them culturally, and even sometimes decimating them biologically. The non-Russian nations are controlled from the centre and prevented from coalescing against the politically dominant Great Russians, who populate the strategically located central inner core of the multinational state.

THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL SYSTEM—with its mixture of cooptation, subordination, and strategic settlement—thus emerged in a manner that differs profoundly from the experience of other recent Empires. Naval expansion to remote lands, followed by limited settling, was not the method. It was much more organic. It was a process of steady seepage into contiguous territory, with the atavistic instinct of survival dictating the felt need to acquire more land, with "insecurity" being translated into persistent expansion. As a result (and contrary to many journalistic clichés), Russia historically was not so much a victim of frequent aggression but rather the persistent aggressor itself, pressing from the centre in this-or-that direction, whenever opportunity beckoned. Any list of aggressions committed in the last two centuries against Russia would be dwarfed by a parallel list of Russian expansionist moves against its neighbours. The vaunted Russian sense of insecurity does exist—but not because Russia was so frequently aggressed against but because its organic expansion has prompted, and was prompted by, territorial acquisitiveness, with its inevitably antagonistic ripple-effects.

AN ADDITIONAL, and enduring, consequence of such sustained territorial expansion has been the emergence of an imperial consciousness among the Great Russian people. Such a notion of "imperial consciousness" is difficult to define, but difficulty of definition is not a negation of the phenomenon. There is something strikingly imperial in the insistence of the Russians on describing themselves as the "Big Brother" of the other dominated peoples; in the spontaneous determination to build huge Russian Orthodox cathedrals in the very centres of dominated capitals (as in Helsinki and Warsaw—and even to replace the Warsaw *Sobor* which the newly emancipated Poles blew up in 1919 with the monumental Stalin "Palace of Culture" thirty years later); and in the deeply rooted feeling that somehow the non-Russian nations of the Soviet Union and of Eastern Europe must be retained as part of Mother Russia's special domain. Anyone who has seen, or read reports of, how the Soviet ambassadors stationed abroad handle their periodic joint sessions with fellow ambassadors from the Warsaw Pact obtains a first-hand insight into imperial and hierarchical relations.

Great Russian imperial consciousness is a complex web of religious messianism, which has long associated Moscow with "the Third Rome", of nationalistic instincts of survival and of power, and of the more recent universalistic ideological zeal. In addition, territorially expansive insecurity has been reinforced by the Communist obsession with internal and external enemies, reinforcing an already existing paranoiac attitude towards the outside world. This complex web of motivations has helped to generate and sustain a world outlook in which the drive to global pre-eminence, for decades measured by competition with the USA, has become the central energising impulse. That impulse sustains the predatory character of Great Russian imperialism.

IT IS THIS DRIVE towards global pre-eminence as well as the vested interest in the imperial system that inhibits the prospects of a qualitatively significant evolutionary change in the character of the Soviet system. Without Soviet intervention, Czechoslovakia under Dubcek or Poland under Walesa probbably would have become social-democratic republics, with Communist totalitarianism effectively dismantled.

But Soviet intervention occurred for the very same reason why internal evolution towards greater political pluralism within the Soviet Union will be intensely (and probably even more successfully) resisted for a very long time to come. The reaction against peaceful change in Eastern Europe stemmed from the same impulses which make Great Russians fear any significant relaxation of central Moscow control. A genuinely far-reaching decentralisation of the Soviet system, even if only economic, would pose a mortal danger to Great Russian imperial control, and thus, in the Russian psyche, eventually to the security of the Great Russian people. After all, what does "only economic" decentralisation mean in political terms in so far as the Soviet Union is concerned? Inevitably, it would have

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to mean a greater degree of autonomy for the non-Russians who would be then in a position to translate greater economic self-determination into growing political self-determination.

To the majority of the Great Russians that is a highly threatening prospect. Any significant national self-assertion on the part of the non-Russians constitutes also a challenge to Russian territorial pre-eminence and could possibly even pose a biological threat to Great Russian national survival. Where would genuine Soviet decentralisation, the acceptance of more democratic norms, the institutionalisation of pluralism eventually lead? Where, indeed, could one even draw proper lines between the Great Russians and the others, given the demographic intermingling of the recent decades? There would be escalating tensions, eventually even head-on conflicts in a variety of areas: in some of the Baltic republics heavily settled by unwelcome Great Russians; in the culturally co-mingled areas of Byelorussia and the Ukraine; certainly on the fringes of the Caucasian and Central Asian republics.

THE DISMANTLING of the overseas British and French Empires did not mean the end of either Britain or France. The dismantling of the territorially contiguous Russian empire could even threaten Russia itself, given the absence of natural frontiers.

The difficulties the French faced in Algeria would be dwarfed on the peripheries of the purely Great Russian lands. Any attempted disentangling along national lines would be messy and bloody, and awareness of that prospect makes almost every Great Russian instinctively wary of tolerating any significant devolution of Moscow's central control. The instinct for survival gives the autocratic, highly centralised, and imperial Soviet system unusual staying power. It neutralises the kind of inner self-doubt and imperial fatigue that induced the British and French to accede to the dismantling of their empires.

2. *A One-Dimensional World Power of a New Type*

WESTERN OBSERVERS of the Soviet system have been loath to concede that the political centralism of the Soviet system has staying power and that the Russian imperial impulse is vitally inherent to that system. It is certainly more reassuring to believe that both conditions are evanescent: that the system will "mellow" because of either containment or economic development (or a combination of both); and that its imperial drive will wane with the allegedly inevitable fading of Marxist zeal. The transformation of the system and the waning of its imperial ambitions will thus relieve the West of the obligation of having to face up to the much more difficult dilemma of determining how to coexist historically in the nuclear age with a powerful and closed political system motivated by vague but highly unsettling global goals.

But what if the Soviet system does not mellow, and what if its military power continues to grow? Rarely, if ever, do Western observers address themselves to the international implications of this issue except occasionally from an extreme Right perspective, focused usually in highly Manichaean and moralistic terms. Yet the issue demands attention and, above all, sober realisation that for many decades to come an uneasy historical —but not entirely peaceful—coexistence with a militarily powerful Soviet Union may continue to teeter on the edge of the nuclear abyss.

The point of departure for a realistic appraisal of the relationship must be recognition of the special character of the Soviet system as a world power. The Soviet Union is a world power of a new type in that its might is one-dimensional, with the result that the Soviet Union is essentially incapable of sustaining effective global dominance. The fact of the matter is that the Soviet Union is a global power only in the military dimension, but in no other. It is neither a genuine economic rival to the United States nor—as once was the case—even a source of a globally interesting ideological experiment. This condition imposes a decisive limitation on the Soviet capability to act in a manner traditional to world powers or claimants to the status of world power.

TRADITONALLY, both the dominant world military power as well as its principal rival possessed relatively matching political and socio-economic systems, each with the capability for sustained and comprehensive pre-eminence. From the late Middle Ages on, naval power has been the central instrument for exercising global military reach. The powers exercising it (to the extent that such global reach can be said to have existed in the age of slow communications and limited weaponry) and their principal rivals were—broadly speaking—Portugal and Spain, (during much of the 16th century); followed by the Netherlands and France (during the 17th century); by Britain, and then first France and later Germany (during the 18th, 19th, and part of the 20th centuries); and finally by the United States and the Soviet Union (during the second half of the 20th century). In all cases until the most recent, the contest was between powers at a comparable level of development. The rival was quite capable of also providing wider commercial and political leadership as a supplement to its military pre-eminence. In effect, the rival, in displacing the pre-eminent global power, could both provide and sustain equally comprehensive leadership.

The unusual quality of the Soviet global challenge is that the Soviet Union is manifestly unequipped to provide constructive and sustained leadership in the event that it should succeed in unseating the United States as the number-one world power. The Soviet Union could not provide global financial leadership. Its economy could not act as the locomotive for global development and technological innovation. Its mass culture has no wider appeal (and its leading intellectuals and artists have been steadily fleeing the Soviet Union). In brief, American displacement could not be followed by a Soviet replacement.

The main reason for this condition is to be found in the Russian Communist system itself. Its bureaucratisation, centralisation, and dogmatisation of decision-making have stifled socio-economic initiative to an unprecedented degree. As a result, the Soviet record in all the non-military dimensions of systemic performance ranges from the average to the mediocre. It still takes literally a *political* decision at the highest

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level for the Soviet economic system to produce some item that is generally competitive world-wide. Soviet economic performance over the years has required social sacrifice altogether disproportionate to the actual output.

Perhaps never before in history has such a gifted people, in control of such abundant resources, laboured so hard for so long to produce relatively so little.

COMPARATIVE STUDIES of socio-economic development, as for instance by Professor Cyril Black of Princeton,[1] show that today the Soviet Union occupies in world rankings of social and economic indices a place roughly comparable to that it held at the beginning of this century. Black's conclusion was that:

> "In the perspective of fifty years, the comparative ranking of the USSR in composite economic and social indices per capita has probably not changed significantly. So far as the rather limited available evidence permits a judgment, the USSR has not overtaken or surpassed any country on a per capita basis since 1917 with the possible exception of Italy, and the nineteen or twenty countries that rank higher than Russia today in this regard also ranked higher in 1900 and 1919. The per capita gross national product of Italy, which is just below that of the USSR today, was probably somewhat higher fifty years ago."

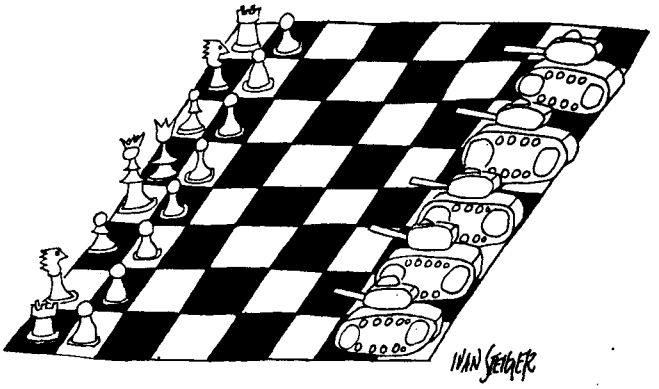
In other words, the extraordinary sacrifices, the unprecedented loss of life, the sustained social deprivation that every Soviet citizen has felt have yielded results comparable to those achieved by other societies at much smaller social cost. Moreover, the pace of Soviet economic development after World War II has been only average, despite the fact that initially the Soviet Union had the statistical advantage of recovering from an artificially low plateau generated by wartime devastation. In 1950, the Soviet GNP accounted for about 11% of the global product; three decades later it is still 11%. No wonder that Soviet propagandists now prefer not to recall Khrushchev's challenge of 1960 "to surpass the United States" in absolute production by 1970 and in relative per-capita production by 1980.

THE PICTURE IS JUST AS BLEAK in the social and cultural dimensions of Soviet life. Recent studies point to a decline in male longevity, to the poor state of Soviet health care, to increasing infant mortality, to the spread of alcoholism. Intellectual and artistic life has become stifled; social innovation has been shackled by bureaucratic inertia. In brief, the Soviet Union is not a society capable of projecting world-wide an appealing image, a condition essential to the exercise of global leadership.

THE MAIN EFFECT of this poor performance is two-fold. First of all, it magnifies the traditional Russian and the doctrinaire Communist suspicions regarding the outside world. That world is perceived as bent on dismantling Moscow's empire and on promoting an Anti-Communist Counter-Revolution. The outside thus continues to look threatening to Moscow, despite the Soviet attainment of the status of a global military superpower. Though the Soviets take great pride in their new military prowess, and have used it to claim coequal status with the United States, in the Soviet perception of the world the US looms as a giant, with its finances, communications, mass media enveloping the world with many tentacles. American technology (currently for instance, microelectronics) keeps on providing the American military establishment with new capabilities which the Soviets take more than seriously. In the Far East there looms the potential for a Chinese-Japanese constellation, while in the West there is always the magnetic pull on Eastern Europe of a Europe that has not fully resigned itself to an indefinite post-Yalta division.

All of that enhances Soviet paranoia and contributes directly to the second major effect of the one-dimensional character of Soviet global power. It generates an erratic pattern of accommodation and competition with the United States, in which (on the one hand) the Soviets seek to attain a condominium with Washington, and yet (on the other) fear becoming locked into the role of the junior partner in effect committed to the maintenance of the global *status quo*. That *status quo* Moscow rejects, for it not only would perpetuate American preponderance but—in Soviet eyes—it would serve as the point of departure for policies designed to promote "peaceful evolution" of a contained Soviet Union, i.e. its political subversion.

As a result, the promotion of regional conflicts, the inhibition of wider and more genuinely supernational international cooperation, opposition to what is called "world order", all are strategies that the Kremlin finds compatible with its own one-dimensional global military power. That military power permits Moscow to play a wider role in keeping with the Soviet imperial consciousness; it reduces the fear that regional conflicts could precipitate a head-on collision with the United States; and it enables the Soviet Union to use military leverage to undermine American pre-eminence in areas hitherto considered as safe US havens. Particularly important and effective in this respect is the Soviet ability (in excess of the American) to deliver promptly from its large inventories huge amounts of military equipment to Soviet clients and would-be friends. In effect, a policy of gradual undermining of American global pre-eminence is a key aspect of the historical self-definition of the Soviet Union as a global power.



[1] Cyril E. Black, "Soviet Society: A Comparative View", in A. Kassoff, *Prospects for Soviet Society* (1968), pp. 42–3.

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AND THAT LEADS to a broader conclusion still: the real danger to the West is not that the Soviet Union will someday succeed in imposing a *Pax Sovietica* on the world. It is, rather, that the Soviet Union, as a one-dimensional world power—committed to the disruption of the existing arrangements because such disruption is essential to the displacement of America—will contribute decisively not to a world revolution in existing international arrangements but to greater global anarchy from which all will suffer.

[2] David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945–1960", *International Security* (Spring 1983), pp. 3–71.

3. *A Partially Revised Perspective on the Soviet Challenge*

IMPLICIT IN THE foregoing conclusion are some revisions of the prevailing Western view regarding the nature of the Soviet threat. In the immediate post-World War II era, the West was preoccupied with the fear that vast Soviet armies would pour westward, literally swamping Western Europe. Internal high-level American discussions—as recent studies by Professor D. A. Rosenberg show[2]—focused heavily on the question of how the US should respond, given its limited but monopolistic nuclear arsenal. Post-war Berlin became the

Why Intellectuals Love to Hate America

Groningen, Holland

NOW THAT *deployment of US missiles in Europe seems more than likely, so does renewed protest against the US this fall. But anti-nuclear demonstrations are only the latest in a series of anti-American outbursts that started in the early 1960s.*

The violent death of President Kennedy was the turning point. John Kennedy was popular in Europe and so was the country he represented. His assassination was a terrible shock for Europeans and it changed the whole US image. Ever since, hostility toward America has grown.

BUT ANTI-AMERICANISM **should not be confused with criticism of America. As the late Norbert Muehlen reminded us, the distinction is the same as the difference between a lynching and a fair trial. People who are anti-American subscribe to Anthony Lewis's view that "the United States is the most dangerous and destructive power in the world." The fiercest denunciations of America have been home-grown. In the past 20 years, the US exported anti-Americanism just as it did Coca-Cola, McDonald's hamburgers and "Peyton Place." The books of Herbert Marcuse, Noam Chomsky, Norman Mailer and other writers of political fiction have all been translated into various European languages. The exhortations of pundits like Jane Fonda, Angela Davis and Susan Sontag were catnip to our media.**

TRUE, EUROPEAN PUBLIC OPINION *also played a part. As far as Europe is concerned, American conservatives are a bunch of nuts and kooks and little old ladies in tennis shoes. They are of the likes of George Wallace, Anita Bryant, Richard Viguerie and the Rev. Jerry Falwell. On the other hand, intellectual luminaries of the American right and center—ideological heavyweights such as Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoretz—are virtually unknown here, with the exception of William Buckley, who is treasured by a small in-crowd of aficionados as a writer of spy novels.*

If a large majority of Europeans still like America—especially those old enough to remember World War II—that doesn't mean they don't criticize. However, a neutral Europe is intellectually absurd, politically stupid and morally abject. Europeans feel in their bones that Europe can't opt out of the world-wide struggle between freedom and totalitarianism without committing spiritual and political suicide.

ACCORDING TO RECENT POLLS, **only a small number are infected with the anti-American virus. But politicians often are smug towards the US. If that trend continues, the positive attitude of the majority will wear off fast. The problem is that the minority consists of the people in the Consciousness Industry—the Churches, the Schools, the Universities and the Mass Media. Anti-Americanism is typical of the new class that has become increasingly important in our post-industrial information society.**

THE RESULTS *of the ascendancy of the Left in our cultural institutions are already beginning to show. Youthful idealists belong to a generation that knows next-to-nothing about what America did for European freedom during two World Wars. What they know of the US is through television: exploitation, bigotry, and violence. We saw American planes bombing "freedom-fighters" in Vietnam and Cambodia; we witnessed violence in Newark, Watts and at Kent State; we were lectured about the machinations of American multinationals in Latin America. And we were regularly showered with hair-raising reports about book-burning fundamentalists, the callous treatment of Indians, the continuing discrimination against blacks, and the plight of the poor and the downtrodden in general.*

In the 1970s we had a ringside seat at the various congressional exercises in American self-flagellation, and, as an additional bonus, we were treated to the heart-breaking spectacle of Philip Agee (ah, at last a real American hero!) confessing the horrible sins of the CIA.

IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING **that Ronald Reagan, with his bellicose rhetoric and irresponsible rearmament plans, has done the unthinkable. He has upset the Soviets (he doesn't seem to know that this is against the code of *détente*) and, by so doing, brought us on the brink of nuclear war. To sum up, America has been presented to us as a violent and narrow-minded country, unfit to live in—unless you happen to be white, rich, and vulgar.**

THE REAL PROBLEM, *however, is not so much the ignorance of these youngsters as the attitude of their mentors. Anti-Americanism is first and foremost a disease of the intellectuals, and as such it is only a symptom of a far more serious ailment that has befallen the more activist members of our educated classes: their revulsion against Western society as we know it.*

As the leader and symbol of the West, the US is naturally their No. 1 enemy. Their attitude cannot be explained by ignorance; on the contrary, they know full well what America is all about. They see it, quite rightly, as the bulwark of everything they love to hate—Capitalism, Representative Government, modern Technology and resolute anti-Communism (they prefer anti-anti-Communism).

It is superficial to explain the ill feeling of these people as a result of specific US policies like, say, the American engagement in Central America or the plan for the deployment of the new missiles. And it's naive to think that more American-European seminars will be to any avail.

The root of the matter is the alienation of the intellectuals from the institutions and values of their own society. There is no American cure for this ailment. It's up to the Europeans themselves to tackle this problem. And if they want to survive as free societies, they'd better do it soon.

Jan van Houten
in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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symbolic linchpin of Western resolve, with the Soviet Blockade of West Berlin in 1948–49 providing an American-Soviet test of wills.

Western, and notably American, anxiety mounted further after the Communist invasion of Korea, leading for the first time to comprehensive US nuclear war planning and to the creation of the SAC (Strategic Air Command) as the principal means of "Massive Retaliation." In the late 1950s, First Secretary Khrushchev's missile-boasting precipitated more intensified US efforts to offset the allegedly emerging Soviet advantage, resulting by the early 1960s in a considerable US strategic superiority. However, by the late 1970s and early '80s, with the US homeland fully vulnerable also to a Soviet attack, the Soviet Union was again perceived as on the verge of obtaining a politically significant military edge (with President Reagan even explicitly proclaiming that the Soviet Union is already strategically superior to the United States).

In fact, during much of the post-War era the Soviet challenge to the West—contrary to prevailing perceptions—was not primarily military, and even now the much more important military dimension of the Soviet threat needs to be seen in a broader political framework. During the immediate post-War years, Stalin did engage in some peripheral probes designed to establish the resilience of the new geopolitical realities; but his challenge was not primarily a military one. Indeed, the West greatly overestimated the existing Soviet military capabilities, in apparent ignorance of the large-scale demobilisation of the Red Army. To be sure, the West (and especially America) disarmed most hastily; but the West confronted an East that was socially exhausted, and militarily also readjusting to a peace-time status.

THE PRIMARY CHALLENGE in those years was in fact ideological-political. The Soviet Union emerged from World War II with unprecedented prestige. It was hailed and idealised in the West (and not only by fellow-travellers). Many in the West so desperately wanted to believe that the USSR would remain also a post-War ally that they bent over backward to see the Soviet point of view on the contentious international issues. Moreover, to the populations of war-devastated countries, the Soviet Union projected the image not only of a victor but also of an apparently successful socio-economic system. It was that image that generated the ideological support and invited political imitation. An enormous American effort, above all the Marshall Plan, was required to neutralise that appeal—and it was on this front, and not purely on the military level, that the initial historical confrontation occurred. This is not to deny the importance of NATO or of the Korean War in the containment of the Soviets; but it is to postulate that the political-ideological dimension was critical in the rivalry.

THE NEXT CRUCIAL PHASE in the Soviet challenge occurred during the late 1950s and early '60s. Khrushchev's policy of premature globalism, based on deliberately falsified claims of missile superiority, collapsed during the Cuban crisis of 1962. Khrushchev's challenge was predicated, however, also on a more generalised historical vision in which economic optimism was the decisive element. The Soviet leader's vulgar "*We will bury you!*" was not—as it was widely perceived at the time—a physical threat but an historic gauntlet, derived from misplaced confidence that American economic stagnation and Soviet economic dynamism would result in the emergence by the 1970s of the Soviet Union as the world's number-one economic power.

That did not happen. In 1980 the Soviet Union was as behind the United States as it had been a quarter-of-a-century ago. It is now also behind Japan. The vaunted technological space race ended with the American flag on the moon. Today the Soviet economy is widely perceived as being, if not in crisis, then at least non-innovative and confronting increasingly difficult trade-offs. Soviet agriculture is clearly an undisputed failure. The Soviet system has generally lost its ideological appeal and that, too, detracts from Soviet global influence.

By the 1980s, however, Soviet military power had acquired, for the first time, genuine global reach, compensating thus for the lack of systemic appeal. This new condition was clearly gratifying to the Soviet leaders, and anyone who has dealt with them can testify to their pride at the Soviet Union's new status as a global superpower.

But global reach is not the same thing as global grasp. The Soviet challenge today, as I have already noted, is one-dimensional—and therefore it cannot be the point of departure for either comprehensive global leadership, or even for an enduring global partnership with the United States. The ambivalent condition of one-dimensional power induces an outlook on the world which is a combination of possessive defensiveness and disruptive offensiveness.

To be sure, it is quite doubtful that the Soviet leaders operate on the basis of some broad revolutionary blueprint, or that they even have a systematic long-term strategy. In real life, most decision-makers are so compelled to respond to circumstances and to cope with a myriad of specific issues that they simply lack the time and the intellectual inclination to engage in any systematic long-term definition of policy goals. The Soviet leaders are doubtless no exception. But the Soviet leaders do operate in the context of an orientation in which the retention of what Moscow controls and the disruption of what Washington seeks to organise provide lodestars for more specific tactics and strategies.

It is important to recall here that there is a basic difference between a genuinely revolutionary world-power and a disruptive world-power. Napoleonic France threatened not only the *status quo*; France's socio-economic development was such that France could serve as the centre of a new international order that would have emerged if Napoleon had prevailed over Britain and Russia. In that sense, France was a genuinely revolutionary power. To an ominous degree, both Hitler's Germany and Tojo's Japan had also the revolutionary potential for creating a new international system, in the event that German and Japanese arms had won victory.

In contrast, the Soviet Union is limited to a disruptive, but not a truly revolutionary, role. It is confined to that role by the nature of its one-dimensional power and also by the character of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons eliminate the possibility of a central war serving as the revolutionary cataclysm. Until

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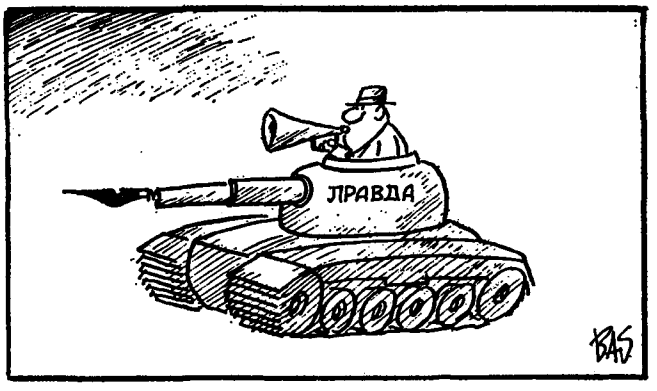
the advent of the nuclear age, a world power could be displaced by its rival through a head-on military confrontation. Military victory was then translated into premier status by the exercise of the other attributes of national power, such as the economy, finances, science, and national culture. The nuclear age has had the effect of making these other means of exercising world domination also become the more critical instruments for *achieving* such world domination.

Yet it is in these other attributes of power that the Soviet Union is most deficient. Moreover, there is no reason to believe, given the inherent limitations of the Soviet system, that this situation will soon alter to the Soviet Union's benefit. The Soviet Union is thus condemned to seeking global status neither by head-on nuclear collision nor by a peaceful socio-economic competition. The only way open to it is that of attrition and gradual disruption of stable international arrangements so that the US suffers directly and indirectly.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY of pursuing such a strategy of disruption is to achieve and maintain sufficient military power to deter US reactions and to intimidate US friends, while encouraging trends hostile to US interests in those particularly strategically vital areas which possess the greatest potential for a dynamic shift in the global political-economic balance. Today, these areas are, above all, the Middle East and Central America.

Accordingly, what happens in these two strategically and geopolitically sensitive zones will determine the longer-range pattern of the American-Soviet relationship and define the Soviet global role. A progressive deterioration of the political stability of the Middle East, combined with the gradual political re-entry of the Soviet Union into a region from which it has been excluded since 1973, could have far-reaching implications for American relations with both Europe and the Far East. The strategic salience of this region is such that any qualitatively important decline in American influence, especially if matched by a corresponding rise in Soviet political presence, is bound to have far-reaching and world-wide strategic consequences for the nature of the American-Soviet global equation.

Similarly, how the United States handles its new dilemmas in Central America, and in the longer run also the US-Mexican relationship, is bound to affect the global balance, and therefore also the Soviet world role. As in the Middle East, it is again not so much a matter of what the Soviets may be doing as of how the United States conducts itself, either by commission or by omission. If American policy results in the "Americanisation" of socio-political conflicts to such an extent that the Western hemisphere is increasingly turned against the United States—and the American-Mexican problems become consequently so complicated that the United States loses the capacity for helping constructively in the resolution of Mexico's internal problems—the result will be a far-reaching decline in American global standing.



That, in turn, would reinforce the Soviet imperial consciousness and the expansionary impulse, while strengthening further the existing structure of Soviet power and the basic character of the system. Indeed, it is appropriate to recall in this connection that in so far as Russian historical experience is concerned, internal political change of truly significant character has tended to occur only in the wake of external defeats, whereas external successes have tended to reinforce centralism and ideological control. Moreover (as Arnold Horelick has shown in a recent Rand study[3]) an improved Soviet domestic performance also tends to encourage a more assertive external behaviour and the surfacing of greater external ambitions.

In contrast, external setbacks have induced profound reassessments of Russian internal policies and have occasionally produced even significant systemic changes. Thus, despite the internal weakness of the Czarist régime, its pervasive corruption and its mindless bureaucracy, the basic structure of its power endured for a long time—and collapsed finally only because of the massive military defeat inflicted upon it during the first three devastating years of World War I. Moreover, the occasional periods of internal reform that occurred in the first decade of the 20th century, and during the 1860s, followed immediately upon external defeats suffered by Russia in the Russo-Japanese War and in the Crimean conflict, respectively. The great Russian historian V. O. Kluchevsky noted that "a Russian war carried to a successful issue has always helped to strengthen the previously compounded order"—but "progress in Russia's political life at home has always been gained at the price of Russia's political misfortune abroad."

BY HAVING BECOME a global military power, the Soviet Union has *de facto* broken through the US policy of geographic containment. At the same time, by expanding its exposure at a time when its own capacities are still very one-dimensional, the Soviet Union is exposing itself to the possibility of over-extension and even eventually to some major external misfortune, because of some protracted military-political misadventure. And in that respect Moscow's strategy of deliberate exploitation of global turbulence could turn out historically to have been a case of playing with fire.

THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS that follow from the foregoing analysis can be posited briefly as the following:

[3] Arnold L. Horelick, "External Implications of Soviet Internal Development", prepared for Rand–SWP Conference, 24–27 June 1983.

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1. The military dimension of the East-West competition, notably of the US-Soviet rivalry, is negatively of critical importance. Although the rivalry is not likely to be finally resolved by a clash of arms, the West must exercise every effort to make certain that the Soviet Union does not gain a military edge which would enable it to attempt political intimidation.

2. Arms-control arrangements should be assessed primarily in terms of their contribution to the maintenance of a stable East-West military balance. That is their central role. Arms control, moreover, should be pursued without historical illusions regarding the impact of any agreement on the character of the Soviet system and its relationship with the West; for the long-term political rivalry will not be ended even by a comprehensive arms-control arrangement.

3. A major Soviet external misfortune is likely to have the most immediate impact on Eastern Europe. This region is manifestly restless and resentful of Soviet control. Any sign of Soviet weakness, any prolonged and debilitating Soviet foreign entanglement will be exploited to break the weakest link in the Soviet imperial chain. Moreover, it is a region that is most susceptible to Western ideas and culturally attracted by Western Europe. It offers, therefore, a topical focus for Western policies designed to dilute the Soviet imperial impulse.

4. Western—and especially American—efforts to maintain and promote regional stability, notably in such vital areas as Central America and the Middle East, are going to be decisive in determining whether Soviet global influence expands, to the detriment of international stability. American passivity in the Middle East and American over-engagement in Central America are the most immediate geopolitical dangers.

5. The positive task of shaping a wider international system that genuinely embraces the newly emancipated Third World, and thus replaces the narrower European world order that collapsed in the course of World War II, will have to be pursued for quite some time to come without constructive Soviet involvement. The Soviet Union—too strong not to be a rival, yet feeling itself too weak to be a partner—cannot be counted upon to become a true participant in the constructive global process since its systemic interests are diametrically opposed to the preservation of the *status quo* in a world which Moscow can disrupt but not dominate.

6. Historical coexistence with the Soviet Union will remain dominated by the largely negative task of avoiding a nuclear catastrophe. It will be Western acts, of commission or omission, that will ultimately determine whether that historical coexistence—a coexistence that at best, for a long time to come, will be precariously peaceful—will eventually produce a more harmonious relationship or deteriorate into wider global anarchy.

The Computer Room, Midnight

The air's cave-chill. You need two coats in here.
No seasons, nothing varies. Day and night
Walls hum, the white-tiled ceiling casts its light
On racked arrays; all's shadowless and clear.
For here's a place of clarity. And I
Inhabit it; secure I move between
These ordered oracles: see at this screen
I pause with midnight-hollowed eyes to scry:
At once the legend answering appears
Lettered in green fire: initiate,
I understand these matters; I dictate,
The strange beasts purr, obey me. Fifteen years
Of mastering these beautiful unmeanings,
Neat as a titmouse building nests of logic,
Conditioned by reward to run rat-slick
Down these electric mazed meanderings.
Time to go home. I sign the exit page,
Wish the guard good-night. Outside the dark
Is wild: great clouds rise up, a ragged murk
Obliterates the moon's faint silver rage.
I walk the empty roadways, I surrender
To masterless complexities of wind.
Back inside the snowflakes of my mind
Are melting on the black boots of the future.

David Sutton

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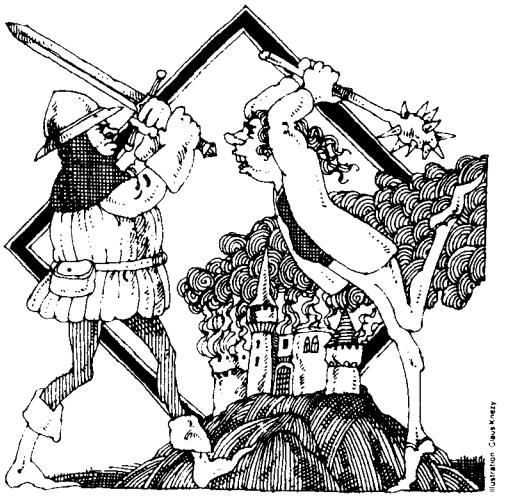
Michael Howard

The Concept of Peace



On Its Illusions & Achievements

LIKE the clown with his suppressed passion to play *Hamlet*, I have always wanted to consider the problem and nature of peace. For some thirty years I have been concerned with the problem of war—past, present and prospective—and have been increasingly interested in the relationship of the state of war and the state of peace. One of the first things that has struck me is the way in which these two conditions are linked.

Most of the wars studied by historians have been discrete, finite activities, limited in time and space, with a beginning and an end; the latter recognised and established by the belligerents with particular formality. Even at their most savage they have had a quasi-ritualistic quality, with their military hierarchies, their uniforms, their deployments and armistices and parleys. In them the element of force is controlled and channelled along certain conduits. However intense the degree of its violence, that element is used instrumentally by legitimised authorities.

It is this formal, structured quality that distinguishes war from the general condition of uncontrolled violence which prevailed in Europe during much of the 7th and 8th centuries, or in France during the 14th, or in Germany during the early 17th, to look no further afield in the world; "Times of Troubles" when man was a wolf to man, and God and his saints slept. It was this institutionalisation and legitimisation of war that for the first time made possible serious peace: *order*, enforced and guaranteed by a State power strong enough to exercise a monopoly of violence in wartime. The development of military effectiveness has normally, for very obvious administrative reasons, been accompanied by and dependent on the growth of civil order at home; while the disintegration of civil order is similarly reflected in the deterioration of military effectiveness. To that extent war and peace can be seen not as opposites, but as different aspects of the development of social consensus and political control.

The trouble is that "peace" is so vast a concept as to be almost indefinable. It is a state of mind as well as a political order and although the two are connected they are not necessarily mutually dependent. Peace is what political theorists are concerned with and what politics is all about. Peace is individual happiness as well as communal amity. Peace is a condition of mystical beatification as well as a coherent and working system of justice. Peace is the object of all the yearnings of mankind, religious and secular; a vision and a promise, a concept at once mystical and practical, supernatural and political. The very name of that concept—*Peace*, *Pax*, *Shalom*—tolls like a bell throughout Western theology and literature. Its quest has obsessed the finest minds of mankind, its promise has inspired our greatest religions. Even the toughest agnostic is touched unexpectedly by those phrases in the Christian liturgy which play on all our profoundest longings: "*the Peace of God which passeth all understanding* . . ."; "*My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*. . . ."; and by the vision, which has so tragically haunted Judaic and Judaic-inspired civilisations, of Salem, Jerusalem, the vision of peace. Concepts like this are not to be pinned down and labelled like entomological specimens by international lawyers or political scientists. We are dealing with the oldest of the archetypical myths of man; a highly emotive subject, as anyone knows who is rash enough to engage in public controversy about it and tries to keep it on a level of purely rational discourse. Anyone skilful enough to inscribe the word "peace" on their banners has won the high ground before serious argument has begun.

But whatever the more subtle or the more grandiose implications of the word for the mystic, the philosopher, or the sophisticated politician, there is a bedrock meaning of "peace" which men have known and used ever since they were literate: the simple *absence of violence*, especially random and endemic violence, from the society in which we live: the absence of armies traversing and re-traversing the land, burning, raping, plundering, killing, whether those armies are official or unofficial, organised and uniformed or mere robber bands; whether they inflict destruction with knives or from a safe distance with bombs. Peace is the simple assurance that one can sow a crop with some hope of reaping it, build a house with good hope of living in it, raise a family, learn and pursue a vocation, lead a life which will not be interrupted by the

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incursion of violence, by physical destruction, wounding, maiming, torture, death. That is what Christian congregations wanted and still want when they pray "*Give peace in our time, O Lord*": not much to ask, one might have thought, but something which the Lord has through long stretches of human history signally failed to provide.

THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED or are at risk of experiencing this kind of "non-peace"—and it is as likely to occur during anarchic "Times of Troubles" as during formal war—are not likely to be over-particular about the kind of protection they embrace to guarantee them at least the minimal conditions of order and stability. A peace which ensures a non-violent environment, even if it is ensured only by a governmental monopoly of violence, is not a bad start. I would not disagree with those who say that "true" peace is more than the absence of war. I would only claim that the absence of war, and even more the absence of generalised random violence, is a blessing not to be underrated; as those who have experienced war know only too well.

The first requirement of peace is thus not so much absence of war as absence of anarchy; the existence of powers capable of preventing recourse to violence by any party but their own, willing to extend protection in return for obedience, and not utterly arbitrary and unpredictable in the exercise of their own power. This bedrock importance of physical security, of protection against either random or deliberate violence, can easily be underrated or even overlooked by those who have never stood in serious danger of either. But "protection" as such is a very inferior and precarious formula for peace. It is basically a palliative against a condition of endemic threat. Its very existence implies a general absence of peace: there would be little peaceful about a city whose inhabitants needed a policeman outside every door.

VERY LITTLE BETTER would be a community where violence was deterred only by the effectiveness with which offenders could be detected, apprehended and punished. I do not sleep better in my bed for knowing that if marauders did break into my house, steal my property and batter me to death, they would be caught, tried and imprisoned. I sleep as well as I do because I know that I belong to a community whose shared values make the chance of anything of the kind happening very slight (though in certain areas even of our own society today it is not so slight as one could wish). My peace of mind comes not from confidence in the police but from confidence in my neighbours. Government protection may be needed to prime the pump of communal stability; in happy Anglo-Saxon communities, it may simply be a function of such stability. But only this communal stability can provide continuing assurance of peace—that is, of a situation where conflicts of interest and of views between different groups can be resolved without force or the threat of force.

But such communal stability may take generations to develop, and it is always at risk from the development of new social forces and dynamics. Unless there is an effective structure to ensure that this development can occur without the use of physical intimidation and violence, that stability, sooner or later, will be shattered. Hence the function that governments and their agents regard as their primary duty and which is the foundation of political obligation: the preservation of the peace. Hence the stress that the constabulary and the magistracy lay on "keeping the peace": the prevention of breaches of the peace and the inhibition of conduct likely to cause them. If governments cannot protect their citizens against violence, those citizens will turn to someone who can, or else do it for themselves. "Peace" will no longer exist.

BUT, IT CAN BE ARGUED, peace will not exist either when the government is arbitrary and unpredictable, when its agents are unreliable and corrupt, or when it is in the hands of one social group hostile to the rights and aspirations of all others. There is then, surely, not so much peace as what has been called "frozen" or "structured" violence, a continuous process of intimidation. Then what is claimed as peace should be seen as no more than an episode in a continuing struggle in which the adversary has, temporarily, achieved the upper hand, but in which we cannot and must not acquiesce if we are to win through to a "true" peace. Can one really accept as "peace" the continuing hegemony of the unjust? Augustine, for one, did not suggest that we could. Peace, he defined as

> "a well-disposed order of all things. For order is a good disposition of discrepant parts, each in its fittest place; and therefore the miserable (as they are miserable) are out of order, lacking that peaceable and unperturbed state which order exacts."

"Peace" in fact is a *just* order. An unjust order is not peace but oppression. Hence arises the paradox, of which we have heard so much during the last couple of decades, that it may be necessary to use violence to obtain peace. And that is why political organisations which include the word "peace" in their titles or among their objectives are seldom on the right wing of the political spectrum. They do not normally equate "peace" with the existing social or political order, whether domestic or international. They would fasten on the adjectives in St Augustine's definition: "a *well-disposed* order", "a *good* disposition of discrepant parts", "each in its *fittest* place"; and they would argue that such a description does not fit society as it at present exists. A society where there is injustice and oppression, where human rights are denied, where races are not treated equally, where wealth can buy privilege, where the State is no more than the executive organ of an oppressive bourgeoisie, or a racial minority, or a military junta, or a party propped up by the bayonets or the finance of a foreign power—all or any of these things may make one believe that there is a *bad* disposition of discrepant parts, and that there can be no true peace until there is a good one. What passes for peace is no more than "frozen" or "structured" violence, effective intimidation by ruling groups; and those who are struggling, by whatever means, to overthrow this intimidation are the true "fighters for peace." It is this kind of reasoning that enables the leaders of the Soviet Union, and those who support them, to maintain that it is not the upholders of the imperialist *status quo*

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but those who are fighting for the realisation of a truly just socialist commonwealth who represent the true camp of peace. And it is this which clothes our own "Peace Movement" with an element of ambiguity that its sympathisers find embarrassing and its enemies cannot fail to exploit.

"PEACE" in the generally accepted usage of the word must involve acceptance of a political *status quo*, both domestic and international, and support for the forces which uphold it. Yet history shows few political and social orders which do not involve *some* measure of "injustice"; few political communities which do not contain groups who consider that the régime under which they live is oppressive and unjust, or who, in the eyes of those concerned for justice, *should* consider themselves oppressed, and ought to be reacting accordingly. As for the majority who enjoy their tranquillity at the price of the oppression of the minority, surely they should also be awakened to the illusory and unacceptable nature of that "peace"? The more sensitive the conscience, the more noble the temperament, then the more intolerable will the injustices of society appear, the more urgent the task of remedying them, and the more odious the hypocrisy of those who can dignify the *status quo* with the sacred name of "peace."

Such people can be compared to the princess in the fable, unable to sleep because of the pea under layer upon layer of mattresses. They present us with a continual and salutary moral challenge. How much oppression and injustice are we in fact prepared to countenance in the name of "order" and tranquillity? Is the situation in South Africa, for example, where a majority is oppressed by a minority, or that in Poland, where a government is kept in power only by the menace of foreign intervention, "acceptable" because these governments, however unjust and unrepresentative, *do* maintain the kind of order which makes it possible for ordinary citizens to go peacefully about their business, to bring up their families and pass their lives in freedom from fear so long as they remain politically docile?

It is a question which each of us must answer for ourselves, but let us not pretend that a notional devotion to "peace" will get us off the horns of the dilemma. If by "peace" we mean order and social tranquillity, this may involve acceptance of inherent, structural injustice. If we mean an ideal, just society, we may have to disturb the placid complacency of our neighbours, and, if all else fails, use violence to disrupt the "frozen violence" that holds this unjust order together. But if we do choose the latter course, it must be in full consciousness of the price we shall be exacting from the innocent when we unleash that element of violence which the patient development over centuries of political organisation and social habit has done so much to restrain. Violence is sometimes better frozen than melting all over everyone in continuous and lethal drops.

THE SAME DILEMMA applies in the field of international order. In Britain and the United States, ever since the early part of the 19th century, there has been a tendency to assume the existence of a static relationship between states, a generally accepted and legitimate international order that needs only to be formalised by the creation of appropriate institutions, and strengthened with mechanisms of collective security to constrain potential aggressors from breaches of the peace; the extension, in fact, to the international scene of the domestic pattern so successfully developed within our own societies.

But even more than in the domestic case does this assumption, these proposals for World Peace through World Law, ignore the dynamics of the international order; the extent to which the maintenance of the *status quo* may appear, to significant elements within the international community, to involve the preservation of a hegemonial relationship which they find oppressive and increasingly resent. Some states inevitably find the existing distribution of power less acceptable than do others. For some the temptation to use force to eliminate what they regard as an intolerable injustice, and one for which the existing mechanisms of international law provide no redress, may be overwhelming when they think they can get away with it. (We need only recall the events in the South Atlantic in 1982.) It is highly misleading to divide the world into "peaceloving" and "aggressor" nations. But we can divide it into, on the one hand, those *status quo* powers for whom the existing international order is on the whole satisfactory, and, on the other, those revisionist powers for whom it is not—who regard it, on the contrary, as oppressive and unjust, and who see no way of obtaining justice through the normal processes of peaceful negotiation carried on within a framework whose basic presuppositions they reject. For them the only way to obtain such justice may appear to be: to fight for it.

SO IN INTERNATIONAL as in domestic politics the choice must be faced. Does "Peace" mean the maintenance and wherever possible the incremental improvement of the existing international order, its preservation as a framework for continuing non-violent intercourse—even though this involves the preservation of unjust relationships, domestic and international, throughout the world, and if necessary the use of force (as we used force in the South Atlantic) to uphold the *status quo*? Or does it mean the elimination of those injustices at whatever cost to international stability, so as to create a more peaceful order?

Should we be in the business of *maintaining* peace, or of *fighting* for it? Do we attach primary importance to the stabilisation of the existing relationship between nations (which is on the whole the position of the Western world, which does rather well out of it) or to the establishment of a new order, a more equitable distribution of political and economic power (as much of the Third World would like) and a global network of People's Democracies (the professed goal of the Soviet Union) which would by definition be truly peace-loving?

Members of the "peace community" in Britain would deny that they adhered whole-heartedly to any of these goals, though they would probably agree that the path to true peace did lie through the elimination of the inequities in the international system which infuriate the Third World, as well as the correction of those racial and class injustices which attract the ideological attention of Marx-Leninist "freedom fighters." But

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they would almost certainly maintain that these goals cannot and should not be attained by violence. If "the struggle for peace" means anything in the framework of our own political system, it means surely the creation of a world community where differences will be settled without recourse to violence as automatically and as successfully as they are settled within our own society: the abolition of weapons and the need for weapons, the development of communication and conciliation, the eradication of the psychological roots of violence and the interests that thrive on violence, and the introduction of world peace through world community, if not through world government or world law.

As an objective this seems so self-evidently desirable that it is critically examined very seldom indeed. But there is a fundamental problem that must be addressed, which has dogged all the proposals of "Peace Movements" for the past century and a half. It is that their objectives, which seem to us unexceptional, so self-evident, so universal in their applicability, are in fact the product of one particular historical culture—a culture that has developed primarily among White Anglo-Saxon Protestants on both sides of the Atlantic, together with those societies in Northern Europe which are culturally and historically so closely related to them. It is an attempt to take the processes which have worked so successfully within our own communities and give them universal applicability in what is culturally a very diverse world indeed. Neither the objectives nor the means of attaining them recommend themselves to Moslem fundamentalists, or hard-line Zionists, or Marx-Leninist partisans who bring a very different set of analytical tools to their understanding of the world. Even those great European cultures which are closest to us and with which we have been in continual contact for centuries, the Francophone and the Hispanic, have their own distinct ways of looking at things: different perceptions and approaches arising out of differences in historical experience and linguistic formulations. The Slavic world is different yet again, and so, I have no doubt, is the Chinese.

The recognition of this cultural diversity is the beginning of wisdom, and I am tempted to say that no one can begin to understand the problem of international peace unless they have mastered the language, the history and the literature of at least one foreign country sufficiently to understand how and why peoples of different cultures may have such radically different perspectives. Glad as I am to see the expansion of "peace studies" in schools and universities, I would be even happier if it were accompanied by an expansion in language teaching, instead of that contraction which is one of the most chilling and discouraging developments in higher education of recent years, both in Europe and in the United States. For our understanding of foreign cultures is not expanding as our physical contact with them increases. It is contracting. Nor is it simply the contraction of our knowledge of the culture, the *mentalité*, of our great neighbours in Western Europe, nor, even more important, of our great Slavic opponent, that is so worrying. I suspect that fewer people in Britain today understand Arabic, or Swahili, or Urdu, or Hindi, to say nothing of the lesser languages of the Third World, than was the case when we were a great imperial power. Even so, we in Britain have the gift of tongues on a lavish scale in comparison with the Americans.

For this has been the problem of the Peace Movement ever since its beginnings in Britain and the United States soon after the Napoleonic Wars—the provincialism of even its most eminent leaders; an absence of imagination, of empathy with other cultures, sometimes of a capacity to realise that there were any other cultures, which was the obverse of their serene self-confidence. It can be seen at its most extreme, certainly at its most absurd, in the US senator who expressed his desire to take Shanghai and raise it up, and up, until it was in all respects the equal of Kansas City. But little less remarkable was the blueprint for "World Peace through World Law", a constitution modelled on that of the United States with some marginal adjustments to take account of regional peculiarities, that was devised by two American Law Professors about twenty years ago, and was looked to by many sanguine people on both sides of the Atlantic to solve all problems between East and West, North and South, at least as effectively as the problems of the United States had been solved by their own Founding Fathers. (Though even that had not prevented their descendants, sceptics pointed out, from fighting as bloody a war as the world had seen for several hundred years.)

The same presuppositions, it seems to me, underlie the far more subtle and sophisticated thinking of the current American schools of Peace Research, and they are not totally absent from our own. They tend to assume a homogeneity of thought-processes and value-systems throughout the world, and posit the essential artificiality of national barriers to free communication. Governments and state-mechanisms are seen, by these schools, not as the representatives and the spokesmen of their peoples, but as their gaolers, inhibiting rather than fostering international understanding. Their philosophy is that of Cobden, one of optimism based on ignorance: the belief that if only *peoples* could get together behind the backs of their *governments*, peace would present no problem. There is, they believe, a world community latent which is basically their own writ large; and it is only the archaic and self-interested apparatus of national governments and bureaucracies and armed forces which stands in the way of its realisation.

It is a noble aspiration. We are seeing today a particularly interesting example of it in the "Campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament" sponsored by E.P. Thompson. But that movement shows all too clearly the limitations of such an approach. The societies wherein one can meaningfully talk of appealing to "peoples" over the heads of "governments" are limited to those rooted in a certain cultural tradition; what we loosely call that of "the West." In dealing with the Soviet Union it is a concept that makes very little sense, and I would suspect that with the Chinese it makes no sense at all. This is not because these are totalitarian states in the grip of tyrannical bureaucracies, whose peoples have only to be "liberated" in order to realise their democratic aspirations. (This kind of illusion is in fact even more widespread among Right-wing thinkers than it is on the Left.) It is because their history and their culture have shaped, not so much a different relationship between "people" and "government", but a different concept

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of what "government" is, and who "the people" are. If we are to communicate with these societies it must be in their language, psychologically as well as linguistically; and until we have learned those languages, peace research is not going to get us very far.

So WHILE WE WOULD ALL—all of us, that is, in this country and elsewhere in the West—subscribe to the goal of creating an international system in which the use of violence is as rare and unnecessary as it is within a well-ordered domestic system, this does not mean that we can simply take our own cultural values and generalise them.

The term "inter-national" is very precise. The entities with which we are dealing are *nations*, very distinct and each in its way unique. They came into being, or developed out of earlier forms of communities, because of their sense of difference from other nations. However diverse their composition, they are held together by common myths and memories and perceptions of their interests—and if they are not, they disintegrate and form new nations which are. Their governments, however tyrannical and undemocratic, are rooted in indigenous soil and have *de facto* to be regarded as legitimate; indeed, they have *de jure* more right to be regarded as legitimate than other groups which, however attractive their values and policies may be to us or to other foreigners, are unable to achieve and sustain power in their native political jungles. If there is to be any international order at all, and in consequence any peace based on it, it must be based on dealings between governments and the mutual recognition of the legitimacy of governments.

Again we find ourselves confronted with the familiar dilemma. Is "peace" the acceptance and stabilisation of the *status quo*, in spite of its imperfections? Or is it the creation of a more just order at cost of destabilising the *status quo*? To appeal to peoples over the heads of governments sounds all very fair and fine to those who advocate it, whether they be Radio Free Europe, the Campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament, or the various front organisations manipulated by the *KGB*. But to the governments thus bypassed it will look remarkably like subversion, the disruption of domestic consensus, and the prosecution, not of peace, but of Cold War.

"They were wrong in the 1930s . . .

RECENTLY *Mrs Thatcher put to the Young Conservatives in Bournemouth the following rhetorical questions:*

"If in the 1930s nuclear weapons had been invented and the allies had been faced by Nazi SS20s and Backfire bombers, would it then have been morally right to have handed to Hitler total control of the most terrible weapons which man has ever made? Would not that have been the one way to ensure that the 1,000-year Reich became exactly that? Would not unilateralism have given to Hitler the world domination he sought?"

These questions, not unreasonable in themselves, evoked a response from the CND and its supporters which can best be described as splenetic. Monsignor Bruce Kent and Mr Tony Smythe compared Mrs Thatcher to Dr Goebbels, and the correspondence columns of "The Guardian" vibrated with such epithets as "wicked", "twisted", "dirty" and "puerile." Obviously the Prime Minister had touched a very raw nerve indeed.

COMPARISON WITH **the ill-omened peace movements of the 1930s is something that the CND is reluctant even to contemplate. Anyone who tries to make it is greeted, not with reasoned argument, but with a barrage of abuse. This in itself suggests that over this question the "peace movement" is not very sure of its ground. Does it really have to be so sensitive? Or is there a serious analogy that should make its potential supporters think twice?**

There are undoubted similarities. When in February 1932, the Disarmament Conference assembled in Geneva, its delegates were bombarded with petitions bearing millions of signatures from members of "peace movements" indistinguishable from those of our own day. Trade unions, youth organisations, women's organisations, church groups marched, demonstrated and organised as enthusiastically and effectively as they do now. Their pressure was taken very seriously indeed in the formulation of policy by the governments of Britain, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and the United States.

BUT WIDESPREAD AS *this movement was, it was by no means equally influential in all nations. The Disarmament Conference assembled in the shadow of the first Japanese moves in Manchuria—moves initiated by the army but commanding significant public support at home. In Italy and Eastern Europe bellicose fascist ideologies were again becoming powerful after the deceptive Locarno calm; ideologies not without their appeal in France and even Britain. And in Germany revanchiste militarism, held in check only precariously under the Weimar republic, had already come into the open; it was achieving political dominance by means of an open intimidation, and within a year was to establish itself openly in power. As the young Auden put it:*

The Devil has broken parole and arisen,
He has dynamited his way out of prison.

THE RISE OF FASCISM *did not go unnoticed by the peace movements. Their members opposed it heroically, often at risk of their lives. They considered it an evil no less great than war, and they were against both. But they believed that by declaring their opposition to both, "Against fascism and war", they had solved the problem.*

They had not. Only in 1937 did the Labour Party cease its opposition to the very limited measures of rearmament which the British government had initiated, haltingly and reluctantly, four years earlier. A young Labour activist then opened the vials of his rhetoric over the government for not having rearmed sooner and faster. His name was Michael Foot.

SO THE PEACE MOVEMENT **in itself, with all its fears and hopes and enthusiasm, can be not unjustly compared with its predecessors of 50 years ago. Can the same be said of the situation that it faces? Can the Soviet Union under Andropov be fittingly equated with Hitler's Germany?**

THERE WERE *three characteristics that made Nazi Germany such a menace.*

The first and most obvious was its militarism—or to use a horrible but more precise word, its bellicism. It not only had no reluctance about using war as an instrument of policy; it positively embraced war as a life-style, as the noblest of human activities. Hitler and his henchmen **wanted** *war, and this is something which even the most ferocious of American hawks do not attribute to the Soviet Union.*

It has been well said that the Soviet leadership wants the fruits of war without having to fight one, but there is nothing unusual or particularly wicked about that. It can also be said that they have no moral compunction

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It certainly appears an improbable way to create a world order from which all threat of the use of armed force has been banished.

THIS PROBLEM posed by the constraints of internationalism, the need to accept that a heterogeneous world can be effectively managed only by agreement between highly diverse governments, can lead the impatient into advocating courses indistinguishable from Imperialism—the forcible imposition and enforcement of one's own value system on everyone else. This, basically, is the view of those who advocate "world government." The unspoken assumption is that such a government would be in the hands of people like-minded with oneself, and not of the Ayatollah Khomeini or Colonel Gaddafi, to name but two. This was, I believe, the unformulated ideal of the Americans and the British leaders at the end of the Second World War; that the victorious democratic allies would establish and if need be enforce their own value systems throughout the world, as Hitler would have done had he been victorious. It is certainly the *outspoken* assumption of Marx-Leninism; and in the absence of its rival, one or other of these imperial systems might indeed have prevailed, and created the kind of *pax imperium* that has in the past given large areas of the world long years of peace. But the very diversity of the world, the increasing self-consciousness of peoples, would have made it unlikely that such an *imperium* would have subsisted for very long. In Viet Nam the United States learned the hard way that high-minded ideals, even if backed by massive armed force, cannot take root in a stubbornly alien environment; a lesson they may have to learn again in Central America. In Poland the Russians have confronted a comparable problem of cultural incompatibility for two hundred years without finding a solution. It is remarkable that they should have shouldered yet another in Afghanistan.

The basic fallacies underlying the assumptions of what we may loosely call "the Peace Movement" are thus, basically, two. The first is that approaches and techniques that may be valid in creating peace *within* a particular culture can be transferred to an international, culturally heterogeneous

. . . *and they are wrong today!"*

about using war as an acceptable instrument of their policy when they think they can get away with it. But that is very different from the "will to war" that lay at the root of national-socialist philosophy and inspired the fanatics who seized power in Germany 50 years ago.

THE SECOND CHARACTERISTIC **of Nazi Germany was its revisionism—a characteristic not of the Nazis alone but of large numbers of otherwise peace-loving Germans. They simply did not accept the settlement imposed on them at Versailles, especially the settlement of their Eastern frontiers, and were determined sooner or later to reverse it. For this they believed military power to be necessary, whether it had to be used or not. But sooner or later that settlement had to be overthrown—***so oder so***, as Hitler was fond of saying, by one means or another. For them this revision was more important than disarmament—more important, perhaps, even than peace.**

Is the Soviet Union revisionist? So far as the settlement of Europe is concerned, almost certainly not. As a result first of the Yalta agreement and then of the treaties signed regularising the frontiers of Eastern Europe in the early seventies, the western borders of the Soviet Empire have been established to their entire satisfaction. Their frontiers embrace all the historic lands of Imperial Russia, with a protective glacis in Eastern Europe under the undisputed control of the Soviet armed forces.

If there is any revisionism in Europe, it is in the West; in the bizarre combination of the right-wing extremists who would call in question the whole Yalta settlement, and the radicals of the Campaign for European Disarmament who would expel the Russians from Eastern Europe by peaceful persuasion and reconstitute a European bloc from the Atlantic to the Pripet marshes. How far the Russians regard either as a threat, it is difficult to say.

BUT IF THE RUSSIANS *are a satiated and a status quo power so far as Europe is concerned, what about the rest of the world?*

Here, in principle at least, they certainly are not. They express support for all those "wars of liberation" that will, they hope, free the world from the shackles of imperialist neo-colonialism and introduce the kind of world-socialism to which, as Marxist-Leninists, they are pledged. And it is this Janus-like character of the Soviet Union, presenting a satisfied and peaceful face to Europe, a revisionist face to the rest of the world, that accounts for many of the differences between European and American perceptions of Soviet intentions. As a global power the Soviet Union is revisionist, even if as a European power she is not. But how far, how fast and how seriously she is prepared to press her global revisionism is a matter for legitimate debate.

THE THIRD CHARACTERISTIC **of the Nazi regime was a ruthlessly totalitarian ideology, rooting out all domestic dissent, eliminating all intellectual freedom and deeply hostile to the liberal values of western culture that inspired, and still inspires, the democracies of Western Europe and North America.**

Here the analogy with the Soviet Union is depressingly exact. The Soviet leadership shares, with its Nazi predecessors, a total contempt for Western bourgeois liberal morality—the kind of morality so strikingly demonstrated by the peace movement—combined with a fear of its potentially subversive effects on their own hermetically closed system. It is not just our weapons that they fear—it is our ideas.

Their attitude towards the West is therefore one of cold and implacable enmity. They may not have towards us the predatory intentions of the Fascist powers half a century ago; but in the world which they are striving to create there will be no place for the likes of us—certainly not for the likes of E. P. Thompson and Bruce Kent. That surely was what Khrushchev meant when he said that he would bury us. After the triumph of world communism, we shall simply not be around.

THAT IS WHY *the analogy with the thirties still holds, in spite of all the differences. Democratic societies, confronted with alien totalitarian ideologies bent on their eventual elimination, need to be able to protect themselves; not simply in order to survive, but in order to retain any influence, any voices in the conduct of the affairs of the world.*

A disarmed Western Europe might not be attacked by the Soviet Union—at least, not for a decade or so. It would be simply left out of account, and the world would be refashioned over our heads, without consideration for our interests, let alone our ideals.

That is where the CND makes so fundamental a mistake. They were wrong in the Thirties. They are no less wrong today.

Michael Howard
in the SUNDAY TIMES (*London*)

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environment; that one can "build peace" without going through the laborious business of *learning languages*, not simply as a means of communication but as a means of understanding the *mentalité* of peoples which may be fundamentally different from one's own. And the second is that a peaceful international community can be constructed by "peoples" behind the backs of governments. The kind of "transnational flows" that are possible between pluralistic democracies, which have done so much to build within the West a genuine transnational community, stop short at the frontiers of those societies which view such osmosis as an instrument of "cultural Imperialism"—as recent developments at UNESCO have shown all too clearly. Outside the West, whether behind the Iron Curtain or in the Third World, governments see the intrusion of Western norms as an impediment in the way of creating the domestic consensus that must be the basis for their own domestic peace. And I am afraid that this reluctance is something that we have to recognise and with which we must come to terms.

FROM ALL THIS it will be seen that the concept of "peace", if examined with any kind of rigour, reveals complexities and problems that are not always faced as squarely as they should be by those who express such eloquent attachment to it. I myself incline to the minimalist interpretation of the term. I regard the relative absence of internal disorder which in this country enables me to travel unhindered, to speak my mind freely and walk at least some of the streets in our cities without fear of being attacked as an advantage not to be despised; and the absence of war for the past 40 years as something for which we should give heartfelt thanks to God every night. As an historian I am perhaps unduly conscious of the turmoils and tragedies through which mankind has passed, of the precariousness and evanescence of peace in the past, and of our extraordinary good fortune in enjoying such peace as we do possess. I am also conscious of the extent to which that peace is the result of the patient work of generations labouring to build up a just order within our societies, and ever-growing links between our societies. I wonder at what seems to me the amazing miracle of technology and organisation that enables so much of mankind to travel so freely over so much of the world unarmed and in perfect safety—something inconceivable only a hundred years ago. I am astonished and grateful, in fact, for how much peace we have got, and how successfully we prevent the conflicts which inevitably arise in various corners of the world from disturbing its global structure.

And although I appreciate the idealism of those who march and demonstrate for "peace", my admiration is reserved for that community of grey, inconspicuous, overworked men and women of all nations—bureaucrats, diplomats, lawyers, businessmen and political leaders, sitting behind desks overflowing with paper—whose boring work, prudent foresight and hard-won mutual understanding across cultural barriers actually preserves it.

Dumps

A sodden mattress, gold, imploded tins,
The primly moulded torso of a doll,
The mâché of impastoed magazines,
Crocked wreckage from a rainbow or perhaps
A symptom as they slip beyond control
And all our older certainties collapse.

Society exfoliates with rust,
Centres turn to edges, shapes to mass,
Solidities exemplifying trust
We placed in the quotidian become
These dumps beyond the perfect panes of glass
That fall between environment and home.

Fey hexagons washed from a plastic ball,
A single glove that beckons from a tree,
The deed-box that resolves to mineral,
Stray sunshine picking over random shards,
These ask us to embrace our entropy
And all the little things we tend towards.

John Levett

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Good heavens! I've been sitting here since ENCOUNTER's last issue and I still haven't done anything about Christmas shopping. I really must get a move-on. . . .

I've got it! A year's subscription to ENCOUNTER solves all my problems at one sitting. And really, who wouldn't feel pleased and flattered to receive a whole year of ENCOUNTER in its elegant new format? . . .

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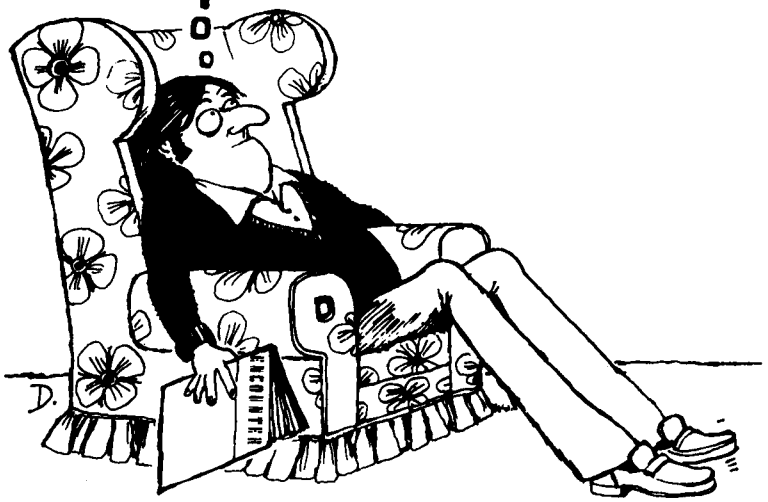
An armchair Christmas in fact!



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George Watson

Who are the Conservatives?

The Paradox of the New Radicalism

FOR THE FIRST TIME in the memory of most of us, the West is now largely ruled by people who are content to be called Conservatives.

Our new rulers even have a sort of international collective existence. In June 1983 Mrs Thatcher, fresh from her second election victory, helped to launch the International Democrat Union in London, in the presence of Chancellor Kohl of West Germany, Mayor Chirac of Paris, and Vice-President Bush of the United States, hailing the new Conservative International as "a great dominion of mind and spirit." That sounds about right. There are indeed those nowadays whose minds are utterly dominated by conservatism—so much so that they can contemplate no other political opinion except as an object of fun. There are even intellectuals among us proud to call themselves Conservatives, or Neo-Conservatives. But who are these people? and what is it they believe?

One certain fact is that they are not conservative. It is vital here to be scrupulous with capital letters. A conservative is a tradionalist in love with old values, and he sees politics as a struggle to keep things as they are. Nobody imagines that Thatcherism or Reaganism is concerned with keeping things as they are. Since 1979 Mrs Thatcher has given Britain the most radical government it has had since Clement Attlee: the only government since Attlee's, indeed, to have attempted, and even achieved, some deep surgery into British social patterns. Macmillan, Wilson, Heath and Callaghan were mere caretakers, by comparison; Churchill, in his second and peace-time premiership of 1951–55, the wettest of Wets. Since 1980 President Reagan has tried to follow suit, though hampered by the modest powers of the Federal government over domestic US policy; and West Germany is governed by coalitions on which the Liberals exert a braking influence.

But in Britain the shift has been exceptionally dramatic. That phrase much loved of the Labour Left—"a massive and irreversible shift of power"—begins to look like an apt description of what is happening. Power has moved from the trade unions back to the boardroom; mass unemployment has been deliberately used as a tough substitute for an incomes policy to discipline labour; the vast public sector is being dismantled, even perhaps as far as its postal services, which have been public since early Victorian times; and private thrift is rewarded by high interest in real terms. It is fun to be a capitalist again, in Anglo-America; the rich are feeling rich.

As a popular sentiment, all that may amount to less than it looks. The Tory vote fell in June 1983, though less than the Labour vote. With 3 million worried about unemployment, and 30 million about inflation, the Tory-Labour contest in that campaign looked desperately unequal from the start. And then the Labour Party had, and has, four albatrosses around its neck. (I would say five, were it not that hardly anybody noticed the Labour commitment to the abolition of the House of Lords, just as hardly anybody would notice if it were taken away.) The Big Four are quitting the European Community, Unilateralism, Collective Bargaining and Nationalisation.

I presume that British Labour can abandon the first of these follies, the anti-European, or at least bland it away—a blandness all the easier to achieve now that governments calling themselves Socialist are in office in France, Greece and Spain. But the other three albatrosses must surely stay. Conference activists will not allow Labour to renege on abandoning British nuclear weapons or bases; the unions, from which Labour derives more than four-fifths of its income, will not allow an Incomes Policy or anything else to come between them and their ancient and traditional Morris Dance known as collective bargaining; and as for nationalisation. . . .

The curious fact about nationalisation, or "public ownership", and one that looks like a precious gift to every anti-Socialist interest that there is, is that Labour finds it no easier to give it up because, in its secret heart of hearts, it has already ceased to believe in it. Clause Four is to Labour what the Thirty-Nine Articles are to the Church of England. It is there not because it is believed or believable, but because nobody can contemplate the sort of debate that would arise out of abolishing it. When Hugh Gaitskell tried to ditch it as party leader at Blackpool, in November 1959, the din was unforgettable. If Richard Crossman's *Backbench Diaries* (1981) are to be believed, the debate even caused Mr Tony Benn to remark in February 1960: "I am beginning to doubt whether anybody can make anything of the Labour Party again. . . ." That may have been Mr Benn's first original thought in politics, as far as the records show, and so far his last. No Labour leader will ever again willingly see Clause Four raised on the floor of conference. Nationalisation is there because it is there, and though it may be modified it will stay.

In short, at least three of the four Labour albatrosses must remain. All that is an enormous advantage to anyone calling himself a Conservative, or even an International Democrat.

THIS ARTICLE *continues the* ENCOUNTER *discussion of the meaning of "Thatcherism", or "the Conservative Revolution", which featured contributions in the last number by Vernon Bogdanor ("A Deep Transformation?") and by Anthony Hartley ("The Collapse of a Broad Church").*

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The Labour act came apart more than twenty years ago, when Attlee-style public ownership and high welfare spending were shown not to do what they were supposed to do for social equality; and it is not going to be put together again. Mr Frank Chapple of the Electricians' Union has called the stark choice before Labour "Socialism or Survival" (*The Times*, 17 June). We can be sure Labour will choose socialism; and reasonably sure that Mr Chapple, who knows them well, expects nothing less of them.

The trouble is that the British view of socialism is by now a view based on experience. We have lived for as long as we can remember, most of us, with the great public corporations like Rail, Gas, and Electricity. Our view is not speculative. When Mr Neil Kinnock talks about "the dependable equity of organised compassion", as he did in the Commons shortly after the new parliament assembled in June 1983, he was talking the language of Labour's fathers. But hardly anybody in the country, outside a shrinking band of Labour activists, still believes that the state, of all things great and small, can organise compassion and still leave it looking compassionate. We know too much.

ALL THAT HELPS TO EXPLAIN why socialism is now dying as a popular movement. "If we were trying to lose", a former Cabinet Minister asked a journalist at the end of a Labour press conference during the June 1983 election, "would we be doing anything different?" Even socialists know that socialism is not a popular view. Nor is it a sophisticated one. It is unpopular above all because most ordinary people find capitalism big and beautiful. Capitalism nowadays is as dazzling as Regent Street during Christmas shopping. "I am an oppressed socialistic housewife", a Czech tourist once remarked to me as she took in the glittering spectacle, hurrying off a moment later to finger bed-linen and porcelain. And socialism is unsophisticated in that it no longer appeals to an intellectual élite such as W. H. Auden and Cecil Day-Lewis or Donald Maclean and Anthony Blunt before the War. Like murder, socialism has come down in the world, and top people have deserted it. It now belongs, if anywhere, to a world of the semi-literate and the semi-educated: to South American priests dedicated to new-fangled liberation theology, to tribal oligarchies in black Africa, and in Europe to the drop-outs of higher education—a sort of *Lumpenpolytechnik* of bedsitter Trotskyites to whom mid-Victorian concepts of class and consciousness still look like the latest thing. Its accent is no longer excitingly that of tinkling cocktail glasses, as in the 1930s, or of high epicene laughter at literary parties: it is more like the voice of Mr Ken Livingstone or of Mr Arthur Scargill. Socialism went grammar-schooly at about the time grammar-schools were being abolished. It has lost its chic. And as for being an activist or a militant in the Labour Party, that now sounds rather like calling yourself a Liberal in the 1920s. You have to be ready to take a lot of condescension.

Our new rulers are everything that is not like that. It is now chic to call yourself a Conservative: the first moment in our century it has been trendy to be Tory. Thatcherism is now the declared faith of a radical intelligentsia. That strange fact should be enough to give us pause. It is not much like the Conservative Party even to harbour intellectuals, let alone flaunt them, and 70-odd years ago Arthur Balfour as a Conservative leader was given a rocky ride. It is still less like that party to be taken over by an idea like Monetarism, or indeed by any idea at all. Conservatives were once famous for governing by the seats of their pants. They have been conquered and annexed in less than ten years by people who read books and even write them.

But then Reaganism and Thatcherism amount bluntly to an ideology of government. The movement even has its gurus, like Milton Friedman of Chicago and Michael Oakeshott of the LSE; it also has bold thinkers like Sir Alfred Sherman who think full-time in think-tanks to compensate for any possible intellectual deficiency in their employers. Dr Roger Scruton is a Birkbeck philosopher who is ready to declare when sober what few Conservatives would say after several rounds of double whiskies, and he is busy in books and journalism taking Conservatism back to first principles and forward again to Mrs Thatcher—as if there were, or ought to be, a straight run between Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* and the present incumbency of Number 10 Downing Street. Mr Ferdinand Mount, who also writes books and, on occasion, learned essays for ENCOUNTER, actually works inside Number 10.

These are indeed strange times. Mr Macmillan and Mr Heath did not behave like this, and I do not suppose it even occurred to them to do so. For the first time since Disraeli, British Conservatism is in the grip of an ideological fervour and of a confidence that outruns the merely pragmatic. There are people nowadays who believe that Conservatism is not just good for the crops or the stock-market but, *sub specie universitatis*, true.

WHAT IS that truth? It is a question that cannot be answered simply by nostrums like Monetarism, which Conservatism could easily outlive in the struggle to live at all. The most certain fact about Conservatism in our times is that it is neither conservative nor constant. It is wavering in its certainties, toying with fancy schemes like education-vouchers, nude bathing at Brighton, or the return of hanging, and dropping them as fast, and yet capable throughout of a high iconoclastic fervour. Mr Mount has written a book called *The Subversive Family* (1982), for example, where he persuasively argues that the family, far from being a conservative force in society, has been highly radical in its readiness to cherish the odd, the exceptional and the creative. It is "the ultimate and only consistently subversive institution" that there is, and the Communist Party had better look out. You would expect an advisor to a Conservative Prime Minister to think this is a reason for putting us all into *kibbutzim*, where we can learn obedience and happy uniformity. Not a bit. Mr Mount thinks the radicalism of the family the greatest conceivable point in its favour. No wonder our times are called strange.

Inconstancy, again, is the hallmark of the new movement. Mrs Thatcher seems to have earned for herself an enviable reputation for resolution—ably abetted by Mr Tam Dalyell, a Labour MP who (I suppose to her secret delight) has mounted a public campaign to prove that she, and she alone, was responsible for the British victory in the Falklands War. But that resolution can only derive from the ringing tones in which she reads the scripts laid before her by intellectual advisors. For she was against an incomes policy in the 1960s, for one in the early '70s as a member of the Heath Cabinet, against one in the late '70s, and for one again (in the public sector at least) since about 1980. Conservative orthodoxy is what the leader says, or is instructed to say. All this has an impressive flexibility about it. It belongs to the wider traditions of the Conservative Party itself, which since the 1840s has been against free trade, then for it, and then against; or for the appeasement of dictators in the 1930s, then against, and then

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(if they are as friendly as the Chilean) for all over again. This is an ideology with elastic sides. And the elastic needs to be there, to accommodate the twists and turns of its adversaries. For the truth is that modern Conservative ideology is essentially an answer to somebody else's. It is not its own guide, like liberalism or socialism, and it has few coherent scriptures like Mill or Marx. It is a reactive faith. Many Conservatives are that because they have ceased to be something else.

IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS Conservatism has meant a reaction against the social-democratic consensus that governed the West between the 1930s and the 1960s. That consensus, which may be said to have begun with Neville Chamberlain's Chancellorship, was based on a faith in high public spending as a palliative to poverty, and in economic growth as a means to pay for it. Anthony Crosland's *The Future of Socialism* (1956), which quickly acquired a reputation of original political intelligence for a rising Labour MP, was a late summary of that view, and advocated the relief of poverty paid for out of economic growth. When the growth stopped in the early 1970s, the consensus was thrown into a panic and then into a despair—except among those who refused to notice that anything had happened, who were most notably represented by the Trade Union Council. It was suddenly revealed that there was no growth from which nobler social policies and higher real wages and salaries could be paid for. A consensus went bust.

By the early 1980s there were three responses to the new situation, neatly represented in Britain by the three political parties. That is why two parties were not enough. The Labour response was that nothing much had happened, if you closed your eyes tightly enough; and that the nation could return to policies of ever higher welfare spending and collective bargaining, with ever higher real wages and salaries. Labour's own economic experts, like Lord Balogh, told their party that this was impossible, and that you could only contain inflation by fixing pay as well as prices. They were not believed. There were internal reasons why socialists had to pretend, in public at least, that such advice had never been given. Being in opposition made that easier.

The second response was the Liberal or the Liberal/SDP Alliance. This was the most strictly political of the three, in the sense of discerning most clearly that our institutions lie at the root of our economic problems. In the Liberal view, the woes of Britain derive ultimately from its industrial constitution and above all from its first-past-the-post electoral system, which enshrine the class war, polarising Parliament and guaranteeing stop-go uncertainties throughout our economic life. But only change that constitution of Parliament and industry through electoral reform and industrial co-ownership, give moderation the chance it has long had in West Germany, Benelux and Scandinavia, and you could have confident medium-term planning and economic success. In June 1983 over a quarter of those voting chose that option, the largest Liberal percentage in over half a century.

The third response is the Conservative, and it is much the most radical of the three, just as Labour's is the most conservative. In the new Conservative dogma, which is as remote from Churchill and Macmillan as it is from Attlee and Benn, the British disease arises out of its lack of competitive discipline. The nation has gone soft. There is plenty of demand: it is just that British industry is too lazy to meet it at competitive prices. It has been softened by decades of collective bargaining since the 1940s when the unions ruled, all too often with the lazy (or cowardly) consent of management. They ruled partly because, in an era when labour was short, employers wanted to hoard labour even when it was unproductive; and partly because the unions knew that they controlled the economy through their power to pull the plug out of a complex and interlocking technical process by threatening to strike. In an age of economic growth, it was cheap and easy to buy them off; and the more they were bought off, the stronger they got. But only lay the scourge of unemployment on their backs, and learn to repeat *ad taedium* the Neo-Conservative motto "There is no more money", and the unions will come to heel—or at least their members will. You then top this policy off with trade-union reforms like compulsory secret ballots, and even the toughest union will be tamed. Competition rules, OK.

But what in the world, it may be asked, is conservative about free competition? That is the greatest paradox of all, and one visible even to some Conservatives. In *The Meaning of Conservatism* (1980), a philosophic study largely written before his party took office in May 1979, Dr Scruton wagged a warning finger at the competitive excesses of his own party. For freedom "cannot occupy a central place in conservative thinking" (p. 19). What is conservative about freedom? It is, after all, vulgar in its social effects. (I am now glossing the argument, not quoting it.) It allows the poor and the unconnected to rise. It lets in the most dreadful people. It is what the Liberals have always believed in, isn't it? It may be electorally clever to steal their clothes: but where will it all end? Mr Nigel Lawson at the Treasury and Mr Leon Brittan at the Home Office may only be a beginning. Come to that, Mr Norman Tebbit's accent is hardly more chaste than you might hear from the leader of the Greater London Council. There are bedsitter Trots that sound better.

THERE MAY BE two attempted solutions to this undoubted difficulty, the one cosmetic and the other real. The cosmetic solution is to adopt a style and hope it looks convincing. Your Neo-Conservative may come from heaven knows where, and he may have been to a school that is not quite-quite; but at least he can adapt his accent, dress like a pre-war London clubman and affect a knowledge of vintage port, leaving claret severely to moderates. Mrs Thatcher's intellectual discussion-groups abound with facsimiles of country gentlemen. They are by now as much the type of the '80s as the hippies were of the '50s or long-haired Marxist militants of the dear dead days of militancy.

All that is cosmetics. A real solution may be harder to find, even impossible. It will soon be increasingly difficult for Conservatives to persuade any thoughtful being that competitive private enterprise, or "freedom", is conservative in its social effects: all the more difficult as we watch competition radicalising and vulgarising the society in which we now live. Radical in theory, Conservative government will be radical in effect. If that still looks like an impossible paradox, it is only because some still cling to a residual notion that capitalism favours the rich and socialism the poor.

But that notion was born of certain Victorian intellectuals—Ruskin and Morris, Marx and Engels. There is no reason to suppose that most Victorians ever believed it. To the ordinary voter between the 1830s and the First World War, commerce (he would hardly have known the word "capitalism") was the cry of the most radical party of the age, the Liberals, and of the most radical wing of that party, the Radicals; whereas the

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Conservative opposition in most regions of Britain was a party of hereditary landed possession and of trammelled enterprise, moving back to protectionism before the end of the century and towards expensive imperial commitments. It was Gladstone rather than Disraeli who spoke of retrenchment, meaning lower taxes.

If we still believe that socialism is left-wing, it is because a small minority view among Victorian intellectuals has filtered down through such survivals of the Victorian age as the Fabian Society, convincing Labour in the 1920s that state monopoly favoured the poor. Since then ideologues of the Labour Left have tried hard to maintain socialism as a living principle. They have convinced themselves, though they cannot explain why they believe it, that public ownership favours the poor. It is their talisman. And the leader of the opposition to Gaitskell's attempt to repeal Clause Four at Blackpool in November 1959 was called Mr Michael Foot.

We are still not as surprised by all this as we should be. Monopolies usually favour the rich. In fact, that, in human history, is what they have usually been for. And there can be no reasonable doubt that a nationalised industry or service is a monopoly. The Conservative-Labour debate over privatisation is like something out of Gilbert & Sullivan. Labour is fighting hard to preserve the monopolistic character of British Telecom, under the odd misapprehension that competition would somehow favour their class enemies. They have not noticed that price-cutting is usually an effect of competition, though a walk along the shops of Oxford Street with their eyes open might have convinced them. Sainte-Beuve once remarked that the basis of all discovery is to be "amazed by what seems simple to the majority of mankind." We should be more amazed than we are that socialism is not the doctrine of the privileged.

Whatever it was meant to do, there can be no reasonable doubt that nationalisation was always likely to favour wealth, and that it has in fact done so: partly through the high prices that arise out of monopoly, which hurt the poor most; partly through encouraging the stock-market by pumping public funds into it; and partly through the chances that public corporations provide for comfortable and pensionable posts for the well-connected. It is notable that the Labour Party has long since stopped trying to explain why we should be socialists. Socialism is the Ark of their Covenant, and it is blasphemy to question it.

IT IS TEMPTING, then, to ask why Conservatives should believe in competitive private enterprise. On the Sainte-Beuve principle, that is a good question to ask. But to the Conservative mind it is the wrong question. People do not believe in competition nowadays because they are Conservatives. They are Conservatives, more often, because they believe in competition. They have forgotten, or never known, that the Conservative Party only started to believe in competition within the lifetime of many still living. That Tory conversion belongs to the years between the Wars. Before 1914 the ordinary voter would have associated commercial competition with the ruling Liberal Party; to their clear electoral disadvantage, the Tories had highmindedly plumped for Tariff Reform, meaning imperial preference. It was not in doubt that this highly anti-competitive view was unpopular, if only because it meant dear food, or that it helped the Tories to lose three elections in a row (1906, 1910, 1910). But then the Tories in that age were in no way committed to the principle of economic competition, still less to freedom in general. They were the party of order, empire, and tradition.

It was only after 1918—with a new and more mercantile Conservative intake into the House of Commons of men who (as Stanley Baldwin famously remarked) looked as if they had made money out of the War—that the Conservative Party began to look like the party of private enterprise. That was part of its inheritance from a declining Liberalism. For all his noisy contempt for the Liberal tradition, the New Conservative of the 1980s, especially if he is a Dry, never thinks to mention that the new Tory commitment to competition is a liberal legacy. Originality, it has been said, is the suppression of sources. The New Conservatives, and Labour moderates like Mr Roy Hattersley, have only recently discovered the merits of competition; and they would be equally embarrassed to be reminded where the idea comes from. Put that idea down: you don't know where it's been. . . .

The blunt fact remains that private and competitive enterprise is the most radical economic system known to man. That is equally true in theory and in practice. As to theory, it was the invention of classical economists from Adam Smith onwards who saw clearly that it would transform, and radically, the Britain of hereditary landed privilege in which they wrote. And in practice we can see how it works when we compare the two Germanies.

If it is a traditional mode of life that you want, with domestic servants and an entrenched rotten borough privilege that does not even have to bother about general elections, then it is the life of a high Party member in the socialist East that you should prefer, and east of the Curtain that you should go. Socialism can give, and has given, the nearest equivalent to a traditionally conservative society that Europe now has: an established doctrine called Marxism-Leninism, compulsorily taught in all schools and universities, and as conformist in its values as medieval Catholicism; a privileged élite known as the Communist Party, based on selected entrance; and a labour force forbidden to organise into free trade unions and content to perform tasks that in the West are often thought of as demeaning, such as hard manual labour and domestic service. If the Conservative Party were seriously conservative, it would not hesitate for a moment to choose socialism. And it is because it does not choose socialism that we should seriously doubt that it is conservative.

Of course the New Conservatives, whether Reaganite or Thatcherite, will do nothing of the kind. They are not historians; still less are they lexicographers. The meaning of conservatism hardly interests them, and its association with a traditional way of life is something they have forgotten as completely as the phases of forgotten moons. As for the rhetoric of compassion which was once part of that tradition, it now sounds as stalely in their ears as the speeches of Jimmy Carter or of Michael Foot. We are back in the age of Gradgrind: of that highly selective misunderstanding of classical economics which Dickens, as an active Liberal, once tried in *Hard Times* to define and to expose. Britain was never ruled by a Gradgrind, though in 1854 a great novelist feared that it might be. But it begins to look like Gradgrindland now. The Conservatives look set to give us the most radical government we can easily remember. They will not be troubled by a sense of paradox. That is because, for the moment, they are too confident to notice that it is there at all.

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COLUMN

ONE OF THE CULPRITS in the common language dividing America from Britain is the word "yard." Like others, it has a respectable past. In Middle English, it could mean either a cottage-garden or a paddock—connotations which survice in place names. I once lived in a country-house known as Great Duryard, i.e. deer park. But when North Americans nowadays say "yard" instead of "garden", the usage grates on the British. The image it evokes is drably urban: a Sesame Street back-alley of garbage cans and concrete. At best, a "yard" in Britain might be a farmyard, smelling of cow-dung and patrolled by hens pecking at straw. Except to devout opponents of metrication, a "yard" could never be sacred. A *garden* is.

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." Self-styled "clergy persons" would no doubt censor that sexist "Lord"; but no tin-eared prig has yet impugned "garden" as too bourgeois a habitat for Adam and Eve. In the Bible lands, Eden was doubly precious —a sinless oasis, as well as the product of divine art. To feel the full force of the word "garden", look at Persian miniatures. The cool of the day; water; fruit; flower tendrils; a cloistered paradise with tame beasts.

The resonances ring through literature like a sweet song. Francis Bacon was gruffly explicit: "God Almighty first planted a garden: and indeed it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment of the spirits of man. . . ." Andrew Marvell's poem "The Garden" was more succulent and subtle, intertwining allegory with lush, unlikely detail—apples, grapes, nectarines, peaches, and melons all ripening at once. His misogynous preference for an Eveless Eden—

Such was that happy Garden-state
While man walked there without a mate

—may jar on modern ears; but the magic remains.

Many lesser writers drew on the Eden metaphor. In "The Wish", Abraham Cowley spelled out his modest ambitions:

Ah, yet, e'er I descend to th'grave
May I a small house, and large garden have!
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
And since Love ne'er will from me flee,
A mistress moderately fair. . . .

In "The Garden", he moralised: "God the first garden made, and the first city Cain." William Cowper's poem of the same name extolled

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of paradise that has survived the fall!

Like Cowley, Cowper listed his pleasures: "Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen." In the same vein, after lampooning "Capability" Brown, he duly contrasted his own green retreat with the noise, smoke, and wickedness of towns like London,

more obnoxious, at this hour,
Than Sodom in her day had power to be.

The stock rustic sentiments reached their nadir in the 19th century with Thomas Edward Brown's "A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!" and Dorothy Frances Gurney:

One is nearer God's Heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.

It was left to Rudyard Kipling to blow the gaff. "The Glory of the Garden" was a patriotic poem exhorting Englishmen to godly industry; but it told some horticultural home truths:

Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made
By singing:—"Oh, how beautiful!" and sitting in the shade,
While better men than we go out and start their working lives
At grubbing weeds from gravel paths with broken dinner knives. . . .
Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees.

To be fair, Cowper had already dealt with such mundane matters as pruning and compost, and had described his daily life with touching complacency:

The morning finds the self-sequester'd man
Fresh for his task, intend what task he may.
Whether inclement seasons recommend
His warm but simple home, where he enjoys
With her, who shares his pleasures and his heart,
Sweet converse, sipping calm the fragrant lymph,
Which neatly she prepares; then to his book
Well chosen, and not sullenly perused
In selfish silence, but imparted oft,
As ought occurs, that she may smile to hear,
Or turn to nourishment, digested well.
Or if the garden with its many cares,
All well repaid, demand him, he attends
The welcome call. . . .

Up to a point, Lord Cowper. This is no do-it-yourself manual. The poet remains the poet as boss—

conscious how much the hand
Of lubbard labour needs his watchful eye,
Oft loitering lazily, if not o'erseen,
Or misapplying his unskilful strength.

Sensing a restive audience, Cowper adds:

Nor does he govern only or direct,
But much performs himself. No works, indeed,
That ask robust, tough sinews, bred to toil,
Servile employ; but such as may amuse,
Not tire, demanding rather skill than force.

TWO RECENT EVENTS LED ME back to Cowper and company. One was the death of Beverley Nichols; the other, the publication of Victoria Glendinning's fine biography of Vita Sackville-West.[1] Both Nichols and Sackville-West made their names as writers: but they ended as experts on gardening. In each case, the transformation was bizarre. As a young man,

[1] *Vita*. By VICTORIA GLENDINNING. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £12.50.

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Beverley Nichols was a blade and a dandy, the Kenneth Tynan of his day. His autobiography, *Twenty-five*, was a snapshot album of Lions I Have Lunched With. Six years later, in his early thirties, he published *Down the Garden Path*; and thereafter, amid a stream of other books, he beguiled a quite different public with horticultural studies. Vita Sackville-West saw herself as a poet and novelist: *All Passion Spent* and *The Edwardians* still stand up well. But what brought her shoals of letters was her gardening column in *The Observer*. Her two longest poems were *The Land* and *The Garden*; and I suspect that the garden she created at Sissinghurst Castle will outlive the rest of her works.

It's been suggested, more than once, that Britain's economic weakness derives from the false ideal of the country gentleman. Obsessed by a vision of rolling acres, we're told, entrepreneurs neglect their business to be squires instead of salesmen or engineers. Looking at Britain's successful farmers, I'm inclined to question the proposition. Less business sense, and more sensitivity, might make the countryside a better place. But there's no doubt that gardening, a mini-version of lordship-of-the-manor, is a British addiction, and that it still has overtones of Marvell's, Cowley's, and Cowper's paradise-on-earth.

Years ago, I rented a house in Luxembourg. Behind high walls, it had a small, neglected garden. "Ah", said the *femme de ménage*, "You'll be able to grow vegetables." Nothing was further from my thoughts: I wanted daffodils. Only later, in France, was there room for a kitchen garden; and it was typical that Monsieur Clovis, who came to help with the lubbard labour, spent all his time on the vegetables and left the rose-garden to me. Only the British, he silently implied, could care so much about flowers.

It wasn't true, of course. The French names of so many roses are enough to refute the notion; likewise the late Chancellor Adenauer's devotion to the hybrid tea. But Britain's unique flower gardens certainly reflect some aspects of the national character—private, romantic, religious, and puritanical. In these respects, even the city suburbs still echo the 17th and 18th centuries.

Privacy seems a British preoccupation. American front lawns, with no fences between neighbours, propose instant intimacy: in Britain, it would feel forced. Houses next door to each other in some London streets wear hideously clashing colours; when they share an architrave, the painted frontier bisects it. In the back, trees are planted as sight-screens, fences surmounted by pergolas, patios shielded with frosted glass. It may be a reaction to high-density living. A refugee friend from South Africa, accustomed to the wide open veldt, was astounded by the *apartheid* in London parks, where families sitting a few feet apart ignore each other, isolated in private worlds. If it all sounds unattractive, the obverse is rewarding. Some British gardens, like those of Oxford colleges, have the secluded charm of willow-pattern plates.

Romance is of their essence. French gardeners—and, before "Capability" Brown, many of their British counterparts—classically favoured vistas, grids, and straight lines, as if determined to subdue wild Nature to prim human purposes. Thus Bacon: "The garden is best to be square, encompassed on all the four sides with a stately arched hedge." He also liked close mowing: "Nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn." All very well for Versailles or Fontainebleau—but rather sad and boring compared with the gnarled, luxuriant, stealthy art of a garden designed to be explored. Even tiny spaces, in some English gardens I know, can spring surprises like secret drawers in a desk.

Religious? Not in any simple sense: not in terms of theology. But accepting the seasons, guiding Nature rather than thwarting it, strikes me as a proper role for human beings, who are part of the cosmos and not its masters or creators. Citizens of developed countries, dwarfed by ferro-concrete, dizzied by speed, and drugged by traffic fumes, have every reason to endorse Candide's conclusion: "*Il faut cultiver notre jardin.*" Care for our planet—and especially our corner of it. I'll never forget how privileged I felt when I first *owned* a garden. It was ridiculous: in the long run, we're all lessees. But this land, legally speaking, was "mine"; and that meant responsibility as well as possession or domination. It was up to me to cooperate with its potential, not impose some preconceived idea. The partnership includes recycling—using waste and ash as fertiliser, to complete a circle too often broken or ignored.

A garden—even the dullest—is also a bid for paradise. It's the bit of earth you can help to fashion as seems fit. The Eden analogy may not be conscious; but it's deeply embedded in the literature and the language. Words have power.

Finally, "puritanical." From the first, the garden was a moral symbol, contrasted with Cowper's "surfeited lewd town." Since Cowper's day, social change has reinforced the garden's moral status: cheap labour can no longer be had. Modern Cowpers can't afford to despise "servile employ" for their own muscles; and handbooks on gardening, in Britain, delight in telling us so. "Summer in the garden is a time for activity, not idleness", they insist. "If you really want a successful vegetable patch, double digging is the only answer." "Some people may seek quick results by laying turf, but sowing grass seed is not only cheaper but far more satisfactory in the long term." The British lap it up with hardly a grimace.

I've sometimes imagined the authors of these manuals as stringy, humourless men with no other interests in life—rather like militant politicians. Do they never read, walk, ride, sail, go to the cinema? Are they perpetually stooped over some cringing pest? Their gardens, I'm sure, would please Francis Bacon: skinhead lawns and all. Listening to BBC radio reinforces the stereotype. Advice on gardening comes from a panel of experts: one academic, one enthusiastic amateur, one ex-commercial grower. There are jokes, admittedly—but often at the expense of some unlucky questioner who wants a short cut to success. "No, I'm afraid Mrs Hardcastle will just have to cut it down and start all over again." And the general tone of the show, though helpful, endorses hard graft and traditional methods: "I'm sorry, Mrs Hardcastle, there are no miracle cures." Nor, if the panel had their way, would there be any common names for plants and shrubs. One of the oddest features of these programmes, as of some gardening handbooks, is their inability to believe how little some of us know. Loamshire accents spew out Latin names and chemical abbreviations, baffling anyone who ever thought that "P.H." was the Ordnance Survey's way of indicating a public house.

What's needed, I suspect, is a new book: *Gardening for the Lazy Ignoramus*—which some may believe to be a climbing rose. It would include such suggestions as not worrying about clover, regarding briers as eglantines, and the care, maintenance, and use of the deck-chair. It would remind those whose fingers refuse to be green that a garden's for enjoyment, not mortification. It would also include an anthology of gardening poetry, with an erratum slip for incorrigible workaholics: "For '*garden*' read '*yard*' and for '*paradise*' read '*purgatory*' throughout."

M

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Karl Jaspers

A Personal Portrait—By DOLF STERNBERGER

AT THE BEGINNING OF MAY 1942, in the middle of the Second World War and at a time of special personal crisis—since his marriage was classed as "racially mixed"—Karl Jaspers, then professor of philosophy at Heidelberg, wrote in his diary: "Gertrud wants to sacrifice her life for me and for the completion of my philosophical work in the world. Yet it would then no longer be my philosophy, our philosophy, but simply intellectual stuff. . . ."

If the situation required it, he would die with her. "Either loyalty is absolute at some point, or it is not loyalty." Jaspers had no longing for death. Though chronically ill all his life, he was imbued with a powerful will to live. It was typical of him that in this "borderline situation" he should discuss the rights and wrongs of suicide, concluding that "suicide is no longer suicide if it is a dignified anticipation of execution in whatever form", adding that "deportation amounts virtually to execution." For this eventuality they had provided themselves with poison. Fortunately it never arose: before their turn came, Heidelberg was occupied by the victorious US Army forces in April 1945.

These diary entries were obviously of an extremely intimate nature, yet they were published during the author's lifetime (and undoubtedly with his approval), together with other autobiographical material, by Hans Saner, his last assistant in Basle, who later became the faithful administrator and editor of his literary estate. (They appeared in *Schicksal und Wille—Fate and Will*—in 1967.) This is no isolated instance of his unreserved readiness to reveal certain personal circumstances. Although in his philosophical works he never recounts or even refers to his own experiences, preferring to drape them under a cloak of abstractions, Karl Jaspers went in for a surprisingly unembarrassed, almost childlike candour in his occasional narrative utterances, especially in his later years. This no doubt conformed with his own moral maxims, to which he so often gave expression by his use of the term *Redlichkeit,* "honesty." We hardly ever learn details of his life, but among these we find the striking revelations (Jaspers had not for nothing studied medicine) provided by his exact account of his own life-long illness written in 1938.

The diary entry I have just cited takes us, in fact, right to the heart of Jaspers' philosophy. It is of the kind that has been given the name "*Existenzphilosophie*", and indeed for a time Jaspers himself used this designation. By rejecting the idea of being obliged "to go on living by himself" for the sake of his philosophical work, and by justifying its rejection with the argument that "to do so would be to disavow the philosophy", the philosopher demonstrates in a flash how existence and philosophy are linked, indeed interwoven. To put it quite plainly: the readiness to die with the person one loves when danger comes requires no philosophy: it follows from simple loyalty, perhaps just simple decency, and it is a by no means rare phenomenon. What is important here, in the case of the philosopher, is the recognition that his thinking would at once be rendered valueless if its existential credentials were lacking. For it is a philosophy not just of *existence,* but at the same time of *communication.*

This word has, of course, entirely lost its aura of mystery as it is used today, in the sense with which American usage has invested it. It now relates to the business of the media, the transmission of news and views. In the late 1920s, however, in lecture room 13 at the University of Heidelberg (and in the philosophy seminar in the Augustinergasse), it was a word dear to our hearts which affected us profoundly, signifying at once a mystery and an ethical requirement (yet one which we were quite prepared to meet). "*Kommunikation*" meant a relationship between individuals—always between individuals, in fact only between two, between "*Existenz*" and "*Existenz*", as he used to say, or between one self and another, a state of perpetual alertness, not so much of wordless union and communion as of unremitting mutual truthfulness. The great sin was "*der Abbruch*", to sever the bond, to withdraw into one's own nature—"I'm afraid that's how I am (*ich bin nun einmal so*)"—to entrench oneself in one's own position, to insist on being right without submitting to a hearing. Jaspers was surprisingly full of life; at times one could imagine one was getting a glimpse of his own domestic experience: even "slamming doors" came to be used as a metaphor for severing the existential bond. But there were no smiles, no batting of the eyelids, no moments of banality or even of humour. Everything was completely serious and remained so, and it typified the

THIS is the centenary year of the birth of Karl Jaspers (1883–1969), extensively celebrated in Europe (and also in Japan where the "Jaspers Society" enjoys a wide following). Dolf Sternberger was his student and later himself a professor at Heidelberg University, and is the author of numerous books of political and cultural criticism, including the well-known "Panorama of the Nineteenth Century" (published in translation by Blackwell in 1978). His major work is a still untranslated two-volume study of the "roots of politics" ("Drei Wurzeln der Politik").

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wholly ethical character of this philosophy that the very word *Ernst*, "seriousness", belonged to its basic vocabulary.

NONE OF MY OTHER ACADEMIC TEACHERS SO impressed me by his delivery as Karl Jaspers, not even Martin Heidegger (to whom Jaspers himself sent me, out of pedagogical generosity, so that I might come under his spell), or Paul Tillich in Frankfurt. Jaspers used to tell how in his youth he had been so disappointed by university philosophers, despite his keenness to study philosophy, that he had turned to medicine instead. And he always recommended the study of some solid subject, maintaining that one should try it out before immersing oneself in the completely different atmosphere of philosophy. I went to Heidelberg to study philology, having no knowledge of philosophy beyond a smattering of logic. I was 20 when I first heard Jaspers lecture, and I at once decided to devote myself, body and soul, to philosophy from then on.

We were told about "borderline situations", about death, suffering, guilt. In my copious notes on these lectures (given in 1928) which I still have, I can see from my underlinings which words and sentences seemed to me particularly intellectually telling or personally moving. In the course of a discussion of bravery, for instance, I find the sentence (only the first half is underlined):

> "*Anyone who fails to retain, in some sense or other, his despair over the loss of the person he loved most loses* his existence as surely as anyone who surrenders himself wholly to it."

Of course I was able to think and feel such things only with the help of my imagination, but it was a preparation for experience, for which it also created an enthusiasm. The title of the lecture course was *Philosophische Weltanschauung* ("The Philosophical View of the World"), and it contained roughly the same material as recurs later in what was to be his most characteristic work, and the one of which he declared himself fondest. Its title is simply *Philosophie,* and it first appeared in 1931 in three volumes, divided into the three spheres of his system (which constantly resists any real systematisation). It is dedicated to Gertrud Jaspers; the same dedication is found in two other of his major works, viz. the monumental volume *Von der Wahrheit* (*Of Truth*, 1947) and *Der philosophische Glaube angesichts der Offenbarung* (*Philosophical Belief in Relation to Revelation*, 1962). This is significant. Other dedications are to his father and mother and, once, to his student friend Ernst Mayer (who was Gertrud's brother, and later an anti-Nazi exile in Oxford).

JASPERS' DELIVERY AND PRESENTATION were in curious contrast to such themes. Everything was divided into chapters and paragraphs, and he read out the numbers and letters as he lectured. This seemed somewhat like a zeal for pedantry, a brake applied constantly to any ardours on the part of the audience. His voice was clear, but not strong; when it rose in pitch in accordance with the importance of the ideas, it soon reached the limit of its register. And he always maintained a cool distance between himself and his listeners, entering and leaving without any look or gesture of acknowledgment. There was no "communication" here. He was of almost "outside stock", *ein fremder Landsmann,* being a Frisian from Oldenburg. In his seminar he was scrupulously polite to everyone, even when one of the participants proved embarrassingly inept.

His eyes were bright and his stature was tall, but there was no warmth in his expression. I shall never forget the fright I had when I looked at a portrait photograph of him displayed with those of other professors, as was the custom then, in the bookshop in Heidelberg's Grabengasse. The look in his face seemed to me positively icy and utterly unconcerned. Yet he did once show some personal concern for me as a student: he had been struck at his seminar by my worried face (as he once told me when I visited his flat, which was in the Plöckstrasse, only a few minutes from the University). There had been wrinkles in my forehead such as were to be seen in one of the illustrations in Charles Darwin's book on *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. It was the observation of a student of nature. I was none the less affected by his attentiveness, especially as his interpretation was correct. Jaspers once again referred to this insignificant happening in a letter he wrote twenty-five years later.

IN REPLY TO A DISTINGUISHED CRITIC—the phenomenologist Fritz Kaufmann, who endeavoured, with remarkable sensitivity, to establish a religious "communication" of man with all being, ultimately with God—Jaspers rigorously maintained that communication existed only "from human being to human being in reciprocity." Thus prayer and compassion were rejected, not to mention social life and casual friendship. The claims of communication, which by its nature was exclusive, must not be evaded—not even by recourse to God.

Karl Jaspers led a completely withdrawn life, never being seen in German society, at the Heidelberg theatre, or the cinema, or even at the concert hall. Those who visited him were almost always invited and entertained separately. This was of course a consequence of his illness, or rather of the strict régime he imposed upon himself in order to be able to live with and in spite of this illness. It had been with him since his youth, and he himself regarded it as being bound up with his constitution. It had been diagnosed as early as 1901 by a distinguished physician (Dr Albert Fraenkel in Badenweiler) as bronchiectasis, which causes a constant purulent discharge. The action prescribed to counter it was regular evacuation of the bronchial tubes by coughing. Jaspers followed this prescription all his life, taking great care not to catch colds. In his account of his illness, which was meant partly as an aid to other sufferers, he describes in detail even the little measures which can be taken (for instance, sitting at least two metres from the window, putting up one's coat-collar when out-of-doors, and so on). A clinical description of the illness had given sufferers only a limited life expectancy, little more than 30 years. Jaspers lived to be 86.

His literary productivity in all this time was immense, beginning with works on psychiatry and ending with writings on politics; in between came his books on philosophy, about twenty in number. This was an achievement of discipline and will; the price he paid was high, but so too was the yield. Admittedly, from the scholar's point of view this secluded life was by no means unhappy; one could even wonder whether he did not actually arrange it all this way. He once wrote that he knew people often did not believe he was ill; visitors were always astonished to discover all the worldly things he knew about despite the sheltered life he led. All the same there is a difference between being fed with information and obtaining it for oneself in the world outside: one can become dependent on informants.

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As an adolescent Jaspers was conscious of a "will to lead an active life (*Willen zum tätigen leben*)"; this he transformed into a will to lead a contemplative, intellectual life. Curiously enough, although his philosophy is so exclusively concerned with Man, it accords virtually no role to the human faculty of volition. In this respect he seems to have left himself entirely out of the picture.

ON THE OTHER HAND WE CAN RECOGNISE traces of personal experience in his thinking—of his monadic way of life in his concept of existence, of his sharing it exclusively with one other person in his concept of communication. This is what Jaspers means by the "objective confines" within which alone communication is possible. It is an ethic of intimacy; one is almost inclined to call it a philosophy of marriage. (This changed with his experience of tyranny: the rescuing of his own freedom turned him into the philosopher of universal public freedom.)

This, if nothing else, distinguishes Jaspers from his most important precursor, to whom he owed so much of his inspiration and referred so often, the great Danish writer Sören Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard could not bring himself to marry, but remained all his life a melancholy fiancé; and this is what Jaspers found unacceptable and alien about him. The difference between them can thus be translated into philosophical terms: Kierkegaard defines the philosopher's task as being "to understand oneself in existence"; Jaspers adds: But I am revealed even to myself "only in communication with another person."

One wonders how such a pale and cumbersome word as "communication" could acquire such importance. Are we not in fact talking about love? Jaspers was careful not to confuse the two words. The reason was not that communication subsumes friendship too—why should not friendship be called love?—nor that communication (as Jaspers indicated) should take place primarily in the form of dialogue, and even discussion can attain to the dignity of communication.

The real reason, it seems to me, is that love cannot be thought of without fulfilment, whereas communication should be *grenzenlos,* limitless. True, "supreme moments" are possible in communication too—that is a basic tenet of the philosophy of existence—but there is no union properly speaking. To put it another way, carnal elements are missing in "existence."

It was as though a higher form of prudery were at work in this kind of thinking. In his major systematic work on medicine, his *Allgemeine Psychopathologie* (*General Psychopathology*) of 1913, it is striking what short shrift Jaspers gives to the factor of "sex." In the later, elaborated version (he worked on it during the Second World War, in his state of inner exile, and it was published immediately afterwards, in 1946, by Ferdinand Springer in Heidelberg) we find under the same topic more extensive and profounder insights: "Sexuality in man produces unrest—enabling him to reach the greatest heights and the lowest depths." Indeed, this instinct is, as it were, admitted to the lofty sphere which otherwise belongs only to philosophy; it carries within it, he said, "loyalty or existential treachery (*Treue oder Wesensverrat*)." None the less he adhered to his criticism of, indeed his contempt for the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud, giving expression to them in his scientific, philosophical, and more popular works. They attained wide publicity in *Die geistige Situation der Zeit,*[1] published in 1931 as volume 1,000 of the popular Göschen series. This was the first publishing sensation with which his name was involved. In it he took issue at one and the same time with Psychoanalysis and Marxism, like a lightly armed David confronting two Goliaths decked out in all their scientifical armour. Both, in his judgment, missed the essential nature of man, because they absolutised his existence "at its lowest level." Jaspers had no truck with the process of "sublimation", because he perceived in man sublime possibilities which must be seen and assessed directly, not treated simply as derivative by-products.

Thus, in the end he even rehabilitated love. Almost on page 1,000 of his massive 1,100-page book *Von der Wahrheit,* written during the most productive period of his internal exile, he confesses to having had an aversion to the word "love" because it was used so lightly and crookedly. "But it always returns, for it is the plain word for all that is deepest and most positive in our being. . . ."

THE FAMOUS BOOK OF 1931, written in the last phase of the Weimar Republic, marked his first step away from the intimacy of philosophy into the public sphere, from the solitude—the shared solitude—of existence into the general life of society and politics. It was the first, but also the last, for many years.

The book shocked me, even angered me, at the time. My own copy is full of polemical notes written in the margins. I was going through a phase of rebellion against my Heidelberg teacher, and had gone to Frankfurt, living among socialist friends. I could not accept the vocabulary of "destiny . . . struggle . . . domination . . . decision", arrayed as they were against "the masses . . . levelling . . . anonymity . . . compromise . . . conformity." One of my marginal notes read: "the view of the age from the armchair of imperilled existence." I quite overlooked certain apposite diagnoses, such as the observation that the universal provision for existence which was an essential feature of the welfare state would produce an *Angst,* "an uncontrollable fear of life"; or prognoses such as the statement that a new war might well occur "which would be the end of the present-day European"; or that "a dark, blind will to war" could be discerned. I also failed to see what was being postulated in the question "whether the masses can be democratised", in the sense of civically assuming the shared responsibilities of citizenship. I was probably astonished by the boldness with which he joined battle simultaneously with Marxism, psychoanalysis, and racial theory:

> "The theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the psychotherapeutic prescriptions of psychoanalysis, and the eugenic procedures recommended by the racial theorists are vague in content and brutalising in their demands and they issue in quite different results from what one had anticipated, when they begin to be put into practice. . . ."

Apart from Marxism the practical results were not yet in, and even Jaspers could not foresee what was to happen. He was a lonely observer and stuck his own neck out. But in order to oppose all these dire consequences which seemed fated he could think of nothing but appealing to the individual to become himself, "*den Menschen an sich selbst zu erinnern* (to remind man of himself)." These are the last words in the book. It was always a weakness of his that the ethos of intimacy was not adequately applicable to the powerful forces of public life.

[1] Published by Routledge (1931), in a translation by Eden and Cedar Paul, as *Man in the Modern Age.*

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WHAT ESTRANGED ME FROM the great man for a time was ultimately something else: the distinction he had made between *Existenz* (which we may render as "real existence") and *Dasein* ("mere existence"). It seemed to me like a philosophical "class distinction" which offended against human equality. In the Göschen volume of 1931 he put it in the following terms:

> "It is not man as a specimen of mere existence that we find worthy of love, but man as potential for real existence, the potential nobility in every individual."
> *(Nicht der Mensch als Daseinsexemplar, sondern der Mensch als mögliche Existenz ist liebenswert, in jedem einzelnen sein möglicher Adel.)*

I see now that this was offensive to others too, and not only to those of the political Left. As late as the 1950s Fritz Kaufmann (whom I have already mentioned, and who taught in Buffalo after emigrating from Germany) called the 1931 volume "a harsh aristocratic document." Jaspers, as he often did, shrugged off this by no means ill-intentioned criticism as a misunderstanding and continued to defend his concept of "nobility", though it was a word he used far less frequently after the War—that is, in his "political" phase. Such nobility existed not as an attribute which one had (*nicht als Sosein*), but as self-choice, choosing to be oneself (*Sichwählen*); it went through all the social strata and was not to be found by any process of selection. In replying to such criticism Jaspers went so far over the top (or under the bottom) as to find this nobility of his even "among workers and peasants." I doubt whether he ever knew any.

In another tell-tale remark: "It [i.e. nobility] is perhaps realisable in the calm of privileged security conducive to regular intellectual work . . ." the profile is clearly identifiable. This notion of nobility—of *Seelenadel*, nobility of soul, even in its existentialist refinement and when relegated to the realm of mere possibility—has something embarrassingly Victorian about it. This, I believe, explains the cold expression that gave me such a fright in the photograph, as well as so many of the chilling judgments one heard from him—or sensed—from time to time.

ALL THE SAME, HIS THINKING HAS a profoundly Christian vein, which I am more inclined to ascribe to him than to the other two teachers I have mentioned. And this despite the fact that Paul Tillich became an eminent Protestant theologian and Martin Heidegger had trained for the priesthood.

I am convinced this trait is discernible in him even though he himself preferred to speak of "Biblical" rather than "Christian" religion—in order to embrace the Old Testament and Judaism as equipollent with the New Testament and Christianity—and even though he was not prepared to acknowledge belief in revelation, setting against *Offenbarungsglauben* a purely philosophical faith. The great Karl Barth made fun of such an attitude, calling the philosophical concept of "transcendence" a mere spectre—a spectre, that is, compared with the "living God" of faith. But some of Jaspers' pronouncements—for example, "To be still alive constitutes our guilt: in the face of God we know what humbles us profoundly"—are born of Christian thought and feeling. And not because of the actual mention of God, who had for so long been treated as a "*chiffre*"—though what would be the point of a cipher if it could not be used to stand for the unknown? In fact these sentences would still retain their Christian character even if they contained no mention of God. This character is attested by their penitential message. They express a decidedly, indeed exclusively, ethical Christian attitude. The whole relationship between "existence" and "transcendence", on which Jaspers played hundreds of variations, is ultimately Christian in essence. All the constructs of existential philosophy, such as keeping faith with one's own destiny and one's own decision and, in this sense, "choosing oneself (*sich selbst zu wählen*)", are in reality ethical precepts, and they would lose any cogency they have if there were no ultimate, no notion of an ultimate, not even a cipher representing an *Instanz*, an ultimate authority which noted and took cognisance of these things: "Thy father which seeth in secret" is how, mythologically, the gospel puts it.

The words I have just been citing occur in the first public lecture which Jaspers gave after the War, after the collapse of the Third Reich. They are to be found in the volume *Rechenschaft und Ausblick*, published in 1951. At the time they evoked a growl of dissent, being understood more as a penitential sermon than as a confession of faith, and people were sensitive to the word "guilt (*Schuld*)." The undiscerning ear missed the discretion of the formulation. The same German reaction was produced later by the great Heidelberg lectures on "The Question of Guilt (*die Schuldfrage*)."[2] Even today it is often said—and written—as though it were an undisputed fact, that in 1945 Karl Jaspers went public in favour of the thesis of "collective guilt." In a sense he did precisely the opposite, by setting the notion of formal responsibility against that of guilt. The excitement has now subsided, and such assertions are made quite dispassionately, but at the time it caused a great stir: never before had the *Alte Aula* been so full as it was for this lecture; it was even feared that the auditorium's galleries might give way. The lectures took place in awed silence; it was philosophical and largely logical discussion. In so far it was possible to judge from the evidence of one's eyes and ears, it moved the listeners to rigorous self-examination.

In the end the distinction between *real* and *mere* existence reveals itself upon closer inspection as a translation from Christian thinking: it is prefigured in the parable of the wide gate and the strait gate—"Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (*Matthew* 7,14).

IT WAS A DIFFERENT JASPERS who emerged from seclusion and oppression, from the school of dictators. "There is freedom only to the extent that all are free (*Freiheit ist nur in dem Masse, als alle frei sind*)." These words are taken from the preface he wrote for our monthly journal *Die Wandlung*, which was founded by me in Heidelberg under American licence; Karl Jaspers, Alfred Weber and, at first, Werner Krauss from Marburg made up the editorial board (and the

[2] *The Question of German Guilt*, translated by E. B. Ashton and published by Dial Press (New York) in 1947; Capricorn paperback edition 1961; n.e., Greenwood Press (London), 1978.
The reaction of the American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr at the time is worth noting: ". . . One must respect the profundity of Jaspers' approach to the problem and his freedom from all evasions. He is concerned to give the [German] conscience no chance of denying special responsibilities for the Nazi evil while being forced as any honest student would be to point to the farther reaches of guilt beyond Germany."

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publisher was Lambert Schneider). Freedom was the watchword; the appeal was no longer addressed to the few, but to all, and what it postulated concerned everybody. For everybody as "individuals", it is true, but each individual needed "the public spirit which supports and carries him." The philosopher came out openly into the forum of public life. Dictatorship had forced him out of his domestic sphere and into the political arena. In a similar and related spirit, when Jaspers, on behalf of the Faculty of Philosophy, offered me a post as a Heidelberg lecturer, I unhesitatingly decided in favour of "Political Science", with which, admittedly, I had yet to familiarise myself.

Jaspers became a political publicist, writing about topics like the consequences of the Atomic Bomb, German Reunification, and the Constitution of the Bonn Federal Republic. He collected as much information as he possibly could, displaying in his sixties and seventies an astounding capacity for the acquisition of fresh knowledge, yet all the time remaining the moral philosopher he had always been. "Self-examination" was not enough; there had to be a change of direction, not just in Germany and Europe, but in the world. There is this theme of "*Umkehr*", a change of direction, in all the writings of this period. "Without a change of direction human life is lost (*Ohne Umkehr ist das Leben der Menschen verloren*)" he said in his 1956 radio lecture on the A-bomb, and again in the substantial volume (of 500 pages) which grew out of this talk.[3] In this book he developed the idea of a "new politics", a politics of truthfulness (*Wahrhaftigkeit*), which would lead to the "shedding" of force as a political means. Again he was thinking, not in terms of reforms (that would be the political path), nor of revolutions (the Utopian path)—but in terms of a radical inward transformation, which is the essentially ethical path. . . . or is it the religious path? or the prophetic? It is, after all, the call of John the Baptist: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . ." But now it was not the kingdom of heaven that was at hand: it was the vision of another apocalypse, a nuclear war.

Our periodical was called *Die Wandlung* (*The Transformation*), and there was one person among us who took this title as a direct challenge: Jaspers. To assess his influence as a political commentator one must first examine what was practicable advice in his writings and what was a call to repentance (*Bussruf*), and how the two elements related to each other. In his book on the West German Federal Republic his prophetic sense became blinded and produced a wayward analysis of the party oligarchies, which he thought would lead (with the aid of Bonn's "emergency legislation") to a new dictatorship. In his work discussing Freedom and Reunification, however, the ethic of truthfulness led to something of a practical consequence: the human-rights need for "Freedom for all Germans" must have primacy in Western politics over any national-state demands. There are, it is true, historically different systems, in which there are certainly different men, but there is no such thing as a radically "new man." Jaspers himself would never have made such an assertion, since the whole tenor of his philosophy precluded the possibility that "real existence" was objectively discoverable. Perhaps his desire to influence and educate caused him, now and again, to forget this basic—Kantian—insight of his; or perhaps in the heat of battle (and there were many fierce controversies) it became a little blurred.

"In Heidelberg it seemed as though our concern was with all humanity (*Es war in Heidelberg, also ob es sich um die Menschheit handele*)", Jaspers said in one of his late autobiographical utterances. He lived there from 1906 to 1948; from 1948 until his death he lived in Basle. His acceptance of the chair across the Swiss border disappointed, even embittered, many people at the time. The man who had been determined not to leave his country, even when he was being persecuted—"Better to endure any danger in the place where one belongs (*Lieber alle Gefahr an dem Ort, wo man hingehört*)", he had written in his diary in 1939—was now leaving it when he was believed to be so urgently needed. Moreover, he left surreptitiously in order not to be prevented, letting himself be kidnapped, as it were, in an official car sent by the cantonal government of Basle, and only later giving a public explanation. Two years before he died he offered a written justification, listing all kinds of tiresome experiences of the day, which fail to convince. And he himself confessed that the question as to why they left was "in the end, despite any number of reasons, unanswerable. . . ."

Here, for once, he was deserted by his characteristic clarity, which his pupil Hannah Arendt praised in her fine speech in Frankfurt's St Paul's Church on the occasion of the Peace Prize award to Jaspers. I suspected at the time—and still do—that even he and his wife Gertrud were attracted by the amenity and security which life in agreeable Switzerland had to offer after all their hateful experiences. These were, if you will, vital and not existential reasons; they too have their rightful place, even if they have no part in his philosophy. Jaspers still had twenty good years ahead of him. After receiving many honours, he died, a citizen of Basle, on 26 February 1969, his wife's ninetieth birthday. She died a short while later.

[3] Published by the University of Chicago Press, in a translation by E. B. Ashton, as *The Future of Mankind* (1961).

One Time

I liked the notion of a slogging journey
Through danger, safe arriving at a good place.

I liked to leave the tenants of my heart
To keep just so until I came again.

I liked words heavy, round and full of fruit:
Midnight, *golden*, *ocean*, *fortitude*.

Life supervenes, death enters.
Those tenants have inherited the earth:

I am lodger now in hearts I made,
And I must serve, and cherish, and depart,

In which is journey, risk and heavy words
Enough, enough, enough. In light of this

I like leaves writhing in a cold spring,
All tangled with a sky of bitter blue.

Mary Sullivan

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Peter Redgrove

Linings

I.
The supernatural does not punish.
To know it, obey its laws.
It obeys its laws.

The grasses in the wind giving off
Pollen like shaking a duster out
Or like flaming light shook
Out of the plants that have been drinking up
Light, leaf and stem, drunkards of light
Vomiting and pissing light, god bless 'em

(So easily to the touch is love
Given up, flows, the nine places
Where one may touch, and she gives
Up her light in those perfumes, just
As I do, not traduced, transduced,
Love out of the world tuned
To that new frequency which wakes me,
The lily of her blouse giving
Up its dark light of love)

Clouds of the little lenses that will magnify
DNA to life-size, the sun-liquor *id est furor*.

II.
The bishop hurrying through the cloisters
Flashing the deep petals of his sleeves;
The blood a monk hurrying through his vaulted cloisters
In purple habit lined with scarlet holy smells;
The blouse which is the petals
Of the lily of her throat, folding back
Deep linings, the flower open unto its vaults, a church;

The river like large deep cars,
Like boxes of black mirrors sliding the long road
Through itself; the dog of the blind man

And the sighted man's dog, they play
Together excellently, the mouths folding back
On teeth, and deep linings that bell, and
The tail folding back in joy, in equal perfumes.
As the sun rises

Fertilising all the shining places,
A crop of images springs like fright
Jostling in the hair, shadows
In the wheat, shadows in the hair;

Comb the night out of the long hair golden as morning.

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Herbert Lomas

The Great Church, Helsinki

"Man has no body distinct from his soul, for that called body is a portion of soul discerned by the five senses, the chief inlets of soul in this age."
The Marriage of Heaven and Hell

Grazing a purple shadow in the square
The body watches, timid and half-aware,
The mind's inventions—calling them a world.
The brain lights up, funiculi are curled:
Aerial, elegant and immaculately risen
As a white bird on the wind, you pause
While conscience wakes and stares: a collision
Of nerves becomes transparent as a bowl:
The structure of a molecule is its soul.
In every world a vision mints the laws.

Brilliant in all its cuts, a diamond mates
The silence of the jeweller and the stone.
Pushed boiling up through pipes of rock it waits
In darkness to be mined and priced and known,
Till bringing other scatterings along
Imagination angles in and smites
A bounce of molecules into a light.
The echoing brain we walk in overawes
With clammy dragon shadows, gargoyle jaws,
But sets up galaxies when the lights go on.

Still as a cloud of vapour in the radiant
Intolerable ache of startling light,
And fragile as heatwaves on your chosen gradient,
You waver and shimmer, a weightless white.
Cathedrals, statues, cities—they do
Look to have stood there always, veiling, unveiling
The stealaway or vulva where our saints
Absconded, though figured now against the trailing
Cloudscapes, gesturing to flying flocks and their complaints
With green and vigorous fists against the blue.

Crossed by the purple shadows of your pillars
We sit on your sparkling steps and view the world.
A soigné czar makes a long-since futile gesture
(With dignity, though, and whiskers rightly curled),
A ragged man is sleeping on the stone.
Meanwhile the bronze of Jesus unobserved
Expects on the lucid skyline, attentive, tall,
For the occasional startled face to pause and turn;
And round the corner with your place reserved
Waits Peter's burly shadow, key and all.

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NOTES & TOPICS

European Diary

By François Bondy

More Sartriana

Paris

HIS ADOPTED DAUGHTER AND heiress, Arlette Elkaim-Sartre, has published a volume of notes *Carnets*—as many as could be found—written by Jean-Paul Sartre during the five months of the "phoney war", from November 1939 to March 1940. The publisher (Gallimard) has also brought out the fragment of the *Ethics* that Sartre announced at the end of *Being and Nothingness* (part of this had already appeared in a special number of the magazine *Obliques*). Sartre knew why he had not completed and published the *Ethics*: after the enormous impact of *Being and Nothingness*, this much more conventional work—which drew upon Hegel more than upon Husserl and Heidegger—could only be a disappointment.

In his paradoxical way Sartre was always a moralist, but he was no ethical philosopher. He never got beyond the statement that ethics are on the one hand inescapable and on the other hand defy fulfilment in our time. Since then, 2 volumes of letters—mainly to Simone de Beauvoir—have appeared (*Lettres au Castor*, Gallimard); further "Sartriana" can be expected. Meanwhile items appear in *Les Temps modernes*, once the magazine that Sartre wished to see "devoted wholly to the present day" and which more and more is concerned with all Sartre's yesterdays, in fact taking on an increasingly commemorative character.

In places I found the *Carnets* to be disappointingly unspontaneous and didactic in tone—something one associates more with Simone de Beauvoir than with Sartre. He writes of his novel *Nausea* in terms of having "proved" this-or-that theory in it. In conversations with soldiers in his regiment he injects, among some lively observations, philosophical discourses that sound a very schoolmasterly note. Nevertheless, for anyone interested in Sartre these *Carnets* are indispensable, besides providing a record of those months during which France held its breath. Like many Frenchmen, Sartre thought at the time that this *drôle de guerre*, this war of waiting, interrupted by minor skirmishes, was typical of "the new character of war" and not (as it really was) merely the calm before the storm. Had the book an index of names, Martin Heidegger's would be the one with the most page-references. Even in political terms Sartre finds his thought important, but he also notes—and this is surprising—similarities between Heidegger's and Descartes's methods:

> "The method of Heidegger and those who may follow him is basically the same as that of Descartes: examining human nature with methods appropriate to the mind itself, knowing that human nature is already defined by the questions it asks about itself. . . ."

But another remark, at the very beginning, reveals the incompatibility of Sartre's philosophy with the natural sciences:

> "The error of idealism is to posit mind first. The error of materialism and of all naturalisms is to make of man a natural being. The religion of man, seen as a natural species: the error of 1848, the worst error, the humanitarian error. Against that establish the reality of the human condition, man's being-in-the-world and his being-in-situation. The concept of the human race has wrought incredible havoc; for Castor herself [Simone de Beauvoir] became aware in conversation one day that she has two fixed points of reference in the infinite series of time: the appearance of the human race, in the past—and, in the future, the disappearance of the human race. My embarrassment, faced with the great scientific anticipations of fiction: the extinction of the sun, a collision between the earth and a comet, etc. For me it all has no meaning and is a bore."

Sartre rejected what he called a "racism of the human species", rejected even the idea of evolution in so far as it encouraged a deification of mankind—this time not as "being" but as "becoming."

The sincerity and modesty of many of his reflections are moving:

> "I have a clear inferiority complex with respect to Gauguin, Van Gogh, and Rimbaud because they succeeded in losing themselves. . . . I am coming more and more to think that, if one is to achieve authenticity, something's got to crack. . . . But I have protected myself from cracking. Even during wartime I am always thinking that I have first to write what I see and feel. I am bound to my desire to write. . . . This intactness is something that rightly irritates others."

Anyone who has waded through the massive *Critique of Dialectical Reason*—another book Sartre never finished—will be astonished to read the analysis of the oath ("*le serment*") given in the earlier *Carnets*. In the *Critique* the oath is seen as the crucial revolutionary act; it creates the group that directs its power against each individual member and exercises it with his sworn consent. The oath creates solidarity through terror, with terror regarded here as something positive (see, for example, p. 448 of the French edition).

To the 34-year-old Sartre of the *Carnets*, however, the oath appeared as a logical contradiction and an absurdity:

> "The oath to oneself, the prototype of all oaths, is an empty incantation by means of which man seeks to charm his future freedom. Moreover he only swears when he feels strongly that there are risks in his failing to abide by his oath. An oath is an avowal of distress. . . . I cannot will my subsequent willing."

A clever dialectician can resolve such a contradiction "at a higher level"; but it seems that on this point the Sartre of 1939 was thinking philosophically, the Sartre of 1960 ideologically.

Sartre, who mentions everything he is reading, quotes frequently from Arthur Koestler's *Spanish Testament*, which

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had just been published. Reading Emil Ludwig's biography of Wilhelm II prompts him to reflect at length on the significance of the Hohenzollern Kaiser's stunted arm.

RETURNING TO the question of his authenticity, Sartre says:

> "It's true, I am not authentic. Everything I feel, even before I feel it I know that I am feeling it. And then I only half feel it, being so busy defining it and thinking it. My greatest passions are no more than nerve impulses. . . . Everything that men feel I can read, explain, put down in black and white. But not feel. I pretend; I give an impression of sensitivity and am a desert (*J'ai l'air d'un sensible et je suis un desert*). . . ."

Something similar was said by the novelist from Rouen to whom Sartre devoted his last great work (and it too was left incomplete): Gustave Flaubert. It is an honest, perhaps even exaggerated confession, and other observations, too, possess the same pitiless candour.

Towards the end—the German *Blitzkrieg* is still a month-and-a-half away—Sartre talks about a second reading of André Malraux's *La Condition humaine*:

> "Started to reread *La Condition humaine*. Irritated by a fraternal resemblance between Malraux's literary processes and my own. . . . I have never been influenced by him but we did come under certain common influences—influences that were not literary ones. . . . I sense . . . how much I am of a period with Malraux (*même intellectualisme*). I have to say that nothing is carried to perfection with him. The syntax is sloppy, the words often ugly and ambiguous. It feels like reading over my first draft. . . ."

Sartre often expresses self-dislike; but he is taking self-criticism rather far when he writes:

> "I was not made for friendship. I have disappointed all my friends, not through any disloyalty, forgetfulness, or want of consideration but through a profound lack of warmth. I have always behaved, as far as that goes, with consideration towards everyone, never missing an appointment, never being neglectful. But there was a diligent quality about it all that must have come out without my wishing it. . . ."

It is such remarks as these that make the *Carnets* incomparably more engaging and indeed more interesting than the many dictated reminiscences and other utterances of later years. One special item that merits attention. After reading Leo Ferrero's play *Angelica*, Sartre comments disparagingly:

> "Feeble. Ridiculous plot: it's Orlando's fault if he fails in his work of liberation. The first duty of a revolutionary who has brought about a revolution is to seize power. Even when the purpose of that revolution was to restore a people's freedom. To free a nation from a tyrant and then, having deprived it of its leader without having instructed it in the use of its freedom, to refuse the responsibilities of power is to leave that nation a ready prey for a fresh tyrant. There is no such thing as revolution without dictatorship. . . ."

But isn't that exactly what does happen in Sartre's wartime play *The Flies*, first performed under the German occupation and subsequently seen as a testimony to the *Résistance*? No one, as Sartre said of Kierkegaard many years later, is a writer of any importance without being contradictory. But perhaps someone ought to look into the hitherto unsuspected influence of *Angelica* on *The Flies*, on the shadow which falls between the idea and the deed. . . .

Out of Warsaw

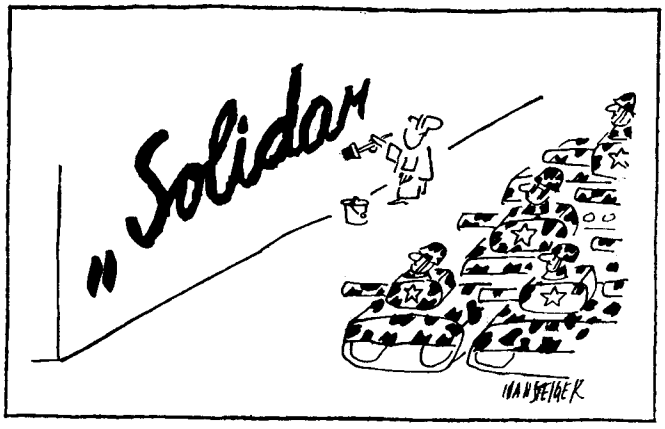
Zurich

WE WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE MET in Vienna, but the Polish authorities at the last minute refused to let him have his promised visa (it was just on the eve of the Pope's visit). But the conference organisers in Vienna proved to be very resourceful; with new-Austrian cleverness and speed they dispatched a TV-cameraman to Warsaw who video-recorded at his home the speech Stefan Kisielewski intended to make in person, and there in the Viennese conference hall, surrounded by twenty large television screens, we saw and heard one of the last open and public voices of dissidence in General Jaruzelski's Poland.

This time they let him out. Kisielewski had a hearty welcome in Zurich, was given an important (and remunerative) prize, and was listened to closely; for he is one of the few who have a large conception for the desirable future of his troubled country (essentially, an accommodation with the Soviet power but on the basis of a new "Finlandised" Poland, pluralistic and semi-independent). He is an eloquent man, and of many distinctions. He is the most popular publicist in the land, but beyond the journalism he is also a novelist and a composer. Until "martial law" he wrote a regular column for the Catholic weekly in Cracow, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, and even his *nom de plume*, "Kisiel" (which is evidently a sweet-sour Polish dessert), reveals his undisguised openness and courage: these pieces have appeared for years in the Paris Polish review, *Kultura*, surely one of the formative influences on the *Solidarity* movement. Taken together, his work and personality form another of the strange "Polish exceptions", displaying an effective unity between the diaspora and the homeland which few exiles have ever managed to achieve.

The prize he has just been given in Zurich was the Award of Freedom, and although he has been enjoying less and less of it in Warsaw (his articles appear nowadays mostly in the non-legal periodical press put out by the underground) his itinerary includes most of the West European capitals. This is doubtless facilitated by his "Catholic connections"; Kisielewski is a Catholic writer who belonged to the liberal tendency in the Church from old pre-War days, and was until recently a member of the parliamentary group *Znak* in the *Sejm*.

A certain amount of "free space" has been carved out of the totalitarian society, and until very recently Kisielewski was expounding his general views rather openly not only in print but also in his lectures (twenty-five in the last year, with thousands in the audience participating in discussions). He put it to me that the sharpness of views occurred mostly over issues



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of liberty and not of the economy; and this was especially so among the Polish youth.

As for the new effort to re-establish state-controlled trade unions, his travels in Poznan, Gdansk and Wroclaw convinced him that "the toiling masses" were not being rallied by the weak and discredited Party.

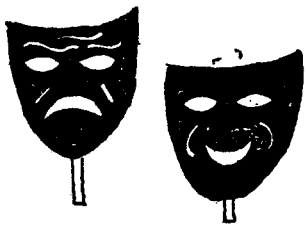
What of the gamble which the General's régime took by allowing the Pope to return home for a second time? He thinks the risk was well taken, on both sides. For the Government there has been some advance in containing the persistent *Solidarity* spirit which is now hardly felt outside the factories. On the other side the underground circulation of ideas remains vigorous; and his own latest book is a collection of a hundred columns, with the jacket-cover illustrating him battering his head against a stone wall a hundred times. Naturally he continues to believe in the power of the word.

Not that he has any illusions about the wordless power of a brutal authority; he was once beaten up outside his home by policemen in mufti. I could see that he was embarrassed by the references to his courage, and he often tries to cover up his modesty with sly wit and outlandish humour (which doesn't always go down well). He told the assassination story he had heard on his return from Australia (he immediately headed for Warsaw when the General declared martial law). The story was about Colonel Gaddifi who had a fit after the Vatican Square shooting, and went into one of his temper tantrums: "I told that bloody Turk to go to the Holy City and rid me of that Pole! The stupid fellow understood nothing—I didn't mean Wojtyla in Rome but Begin in Jerusalem."

I asked about Adam Schaff, once the official exponent of orthodox Marxism-Leninism in Poland, in a later phase of slightly less doctrinaire ideas. Evidently he has transferred his *existenz* from Warsaw. He now works in Vienna for an international organisation as the official Polish representative. Schaff and Kisielewski have been debating in the pages of the Austrian *Europäische Rundschau*. For Kisielewski, Schaff remains "the kind of Marxist who believes in the ultimate victory of Communism but meanwhile wants to live in another century. He likes to live in the West, and at least enjoy the last days of dying capitalism. . . ."

Genet's Come-back

Paris



SUDDENLY he's back again: his plays have been put on by Patrice Chéreau in Paris and by Peter Stein in Berlin; his *Querelle* was made into a film by Fassbinder; and his books are being reissued. Contrary to all expectation, Genet appears to be at the peak of his fame.

I found Jean Genet, at 73, living near the Place des Ternes, in one room. There was a mattress on the floor (but this is how he sleeps in luxury hotels too). Large ashtrays were full to the brim, unemptied for days on end. "Let's go to the *Brasserie Lorraine*", he suggested. "I liked sitting there during the Occupation, looking at the handsome German soldiers. . . ."

What of German visitors today? They're more numerous now since his "renaissance", and all come to express their admiration. "That's just German sentimentality", he says; "it doesn't appeal to me." As he said in Berlin, "The Germans used to be strong. . . . Now you're just gross!" After touring the city for two hours he is *au courant*: "A completely Americanised city! At least it might have occurred to them to put a glass dome over the stump of the *Gedächtniskirche*."

When Director Hans Neuenfels wanted to know how he enjoyed his new-found fame in Germany—the productions, the films—Genet replied, "To be famous in Germany is not to be all that famous." When I tried to get a recordable conversation going, I asked about the meaning of the unseen trial of a traitor in *The Blacks*. Could it be that at the back of his mind was Sartre's somewhat elliptical remark, in his book *Saint Genet*, about the Moscow Show Trials and about the unmasking of traitors as a stock ingredient of revolutions—could that have inspired him? "Whether you understand it or not", Genet replies, "doesn't really interest me." After seeing Patrice Chéreau's production of *The Screens* he says, "That's the first production of *Les Paravents* since my death." In another conversation he says, "I don't know whether I've brought a new form of expression into the French language. I don't know whether I've created a new kind of writing. But if I have succeeded in doing anything of the sort it's not because I love the French language—it's because I hate it!"

JEAN GENET'S latest work, *Four Hours in Shatila,* appeared in the *Revue d'études palestiniennes* (Winter 1983); and it is not easy to believe that this little old man (he speaks fluent Arabic) sneaked into the camp after it had been devastated and saw the dead only hours after the massacre. One remembers that years before he had travelled to New York to live with the Black Panthers, and to be present at their trial.

In his early days Genet got around the city streets a good deal as a thief and a male prostitute. Now he can afford to fly, thanks to his royalties, and he is still on the go, travelling light, careless about his health. He does not own a house or an apartment, but he has bought himself a grave in Morocco.

OVER THE PAST twenty years or so Jean Genet has written a few important essays; but no poems, novels, or plays. Of the earlier time of his "literary activity" he speaks in the past tense, as he does of the time when he "had a sex-life." Having grown up as an orphan in his village and been shunted between reformatories and prisons, he finally—as he puts it himself—"*wrote* his ticket" with his astonishing books and had his cause embraced by France's leading writers from Cocteau to Sartre. This remarkable destiny may partly explain the fascination that surrounds him even today.

Has he remained, then, the epitome of all that is "beyond the pale", of the "downright unspeakable?" This self-taught writer still commands a force of language and imagery to burst prison walls, yet even today he is unfamiliar with many things educated people talk about. "What do you mean by Chekhov? Who's Chekhov?" But what he does know—Ronsard, Dostoevsky, Proust—he knows intimately, almost I felt as if he had written their works himself. He has spent months reading and pondering the few books he regards as essential, sometimes devoting a whole day to just a few lines.

Genet is an outsider who has found his way to the centre of things. He is a self-indulgent devotee of his own *abjection,* of utter degradation. Amid the stench of "sweat, sperm and excrement" he writes lean, clean, and well-formed periods worthy of the devout Bossuet, Louis XIV's court preacher.

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There was a time when refined aesthetes had a taste for dirt—*le goût de la boue*—and regarded it as the ultimate in refinement. Here we have a man who actually comes from the dirt, yet manages to surpass the aesthete in the regal sublimity of his language.

The fact that Genet has now recovered his fame does not mean that he is better understood and reintegrated. It is rather a function of the insoluble enigma he presents, the contradictions which manifest themselves in his various conversations and elsewhere. A few familiar phrases recur, but otherwise he keeps shifting his ground.

Does Genet want victory for "the oppressed"? Does he still share their cause if they themselves resort to injustice and terror? Or does he think that if they were to win he would find them as alien as he finds all victors?

Is he—as André Malraux said in the *Assemblée Nationale* to justify the performance of *Les Paravents* at the National Theatre against protesting Gaullists—"the poet of death, who sees everything living from this viewpoint"? Genet is all "*existence*", and at the same time appears to be a total man of letters. In his novels he reminds us that the reader should always be waiting for what comes next, which might well clear up some of the obscurities; and in his plays he reminds us that the action is taking place in a theatre, with stage conventions, and nowhere else. In this way he destroys the illusion of realism; what he offers is fascination, not a message.

In *Les Bonnes* he wished the maids might be played by very young men. The reverse is the case with *Les Nègres*, where he believed the actors should all be black—an attitude he has modified for Peter Stein, with whom he has spent hours talking about Africa. If this conversation had been taken down like the one between Genet, Sartre and Giacometti it would only prove that he claims the right to contradict himself. Sartre said it: there was no good writer who did not contradict himself. He meant Kierkegaard, but perhaps hinted at Genet (and himself).

Is it possible to give a "valid interpretation" of Genet? The three plays he wrote after recovering from the shock of Sartre's *Saint Genet* analysis—he says the recovery took six years—lend themselves to the most varied explications. One thing the performances, in Genet's sense, have in common: exaggeration; ritual; the wheel coming full circle; the mirror-effect. One of the best books so far written about Genet—by the Englishman Richard Coe—begins with a detailed account of the 1947 ballet *Adame Miroir,* in which all the basic motifs are wordlessly presented. Another extensive interpretation is also given in English, by Philip Thody. I doubt whether Genet's new French and German admirers have such good guides.

Both the keen-witted analyst and the poet come across characteristically in the little volume *Lettres à Roger Blin*. Speaking of the tightrope walker, Genet says: "Being outwardly damned allows him the freedom to indulge in the most daring feats, since he is no longer troubled by being observed. . . . What he has to express is a necessity which is not demanded by life, but demanded—and commanded—by death."

To Roger Blin he writes about the first French performance of *Les Paravents* (the world première took place in West Berlin during the Algerian war): "Every scene in every set must be prepared and played with all the rigour of a self-contained play, with no visible joins. And there must be no hint that another scene or another set is to follow. . . ."

The ritual and ceremonial of funerals take up far more space than homosexuality, which Jean Genet (unlike André Gide) associates with betrayal and theft, not with "naturalness"—yet Genet refuses to accept Sartre's interpretation of homosexuality as something imposed on the "thief" by others. These, he maintains, are feelings he has always had, and what else was there in the reformatory? By contrast with the high-falutin' interpretations of others, Genet insists on his sobriety and straightforwardness. He does not want to destroy the norms of bourgeois society; he simply confronts them provocatively as one who is different. The learned dissertations written about him by criminologists and sexologists only lead us away from the works: what matters is literature. Still, evidently he is not afraid of *kitsch*: "I want to write a book that is full of flowers, snow-white petticoats and blue ribbons . . ."—and he gets away with it. To him, as to Baudelaire, evil is "the distinguished thing", special, sacred. In Hitler's Germany, which was a "Robber-state", he would not have wanted to be a thief. There is nothing more foreign to him than the "banality of evil."

A CURIOUS FATE: the outcast, through his writing, joins the ranks of the chosen. He sees writing not as activity, but as atrophy. A pose? With the plays he entered a new world of expression: we must "feel events as we feel something burning us." No, Genet is not cut out to be a cult figure; he has no slogan that would go on a banner. In his writings and his life both liberty and license are things he takes for granted. If this is immoderate, it is because immoderation is the essence of the man.

Bettino Craxi

Rome

NO MATTER that his father is of Sicilian origin; Italy's first socialist Prime Minister is taken to be a typical Milanese, indeed of that robust, decisive Northern character which marks one as *il tedesco*—a "German." It was only seven years ago that he took over the leadership of the Socialist Party, vowed to reform it, revitalise it, and overcome at long last the post-War polarisation of Italian politics between the Christian Democrats and the Communists. What are the prospects for this new, unprecedented coalition of non-Communist forces under a young and vigorous Social Democratic leader?

In the first place we—and he—have to face the fact that the majority of his Cabinet Ministers were not selected by him but by the general secretary of the *democristiani*, Signor Ciriaco De Mita, as agreed by the various *correnti* of his own conflicting factions. The basic formula remains the same as before, the "*pentapartito*", the coalition of five parties. In a sense it is an ingathering of the defeated, although only the Christian Democrats booked important losses and the small "laicistic" parties gathered a little extra popular support. Even Bettino Craxi did not emerge as a victor, despite his singular tactical triumph. In the earlier regional elections the Socialists were able to increase their share of the votes to some 15%, and it seemed to presage the long-hoped-for breakthrough. Craxi

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then forced Prime Minister Fanfani into new elections to the Parliament, but he reached only 11%. The five wound up with fewer deputies; at the same time Almirante's Right-wing "neo-fascist" party (which isn't acceptable to any coalition permutation or combination) registered an advance.

Italian politics seemed to be, in Indro Montanelli's phrase, in the shadow of the "white and black ballots"—i.e. the unmarked ballots (those who did not vote for any party) and the fascist ballots (those who voted for Almirante). Popular feeling grew stronger against the Communist Party which after all only wants a chance to get in on the governing coalition. Is it Bettino Craxi's illusion that he has an opportunity to introduce a "new politics" on to the Italian scene?

Party politics and their traditional organisations are declining in force, and decline has long set in in both the public and private sectors of Italian industry, now showing even larger deficits than ever before. The only item that isn't sinking is the rate of inflation. The bitter joke was: Who says Italy hasn't gone red? Not the colour of politics but of bankruptcy.

THE *democristiani* may still be convinced that Providence has ordained them to be the party of the State, although they are now having difficulty with the "accident" which would explain losing both the Presidency and the Prime Ministership of the country. It could be that difficulties will be made for a Craxi government, bringing on old familiar "crises" and yet another fall of a makeshift Cabinet in Rome. In that event one thing is surely clear: the elections to come would register a compounding of the mistrust, disaffection and even anger at and with the leading five political parties and, perhaps even more, against democratic institutions themselves. The "white" and the "black" ballots would increase, and democracy would be increasingly unable to cope with the problems which all the politicians, in articles and speeches, have long committed themselves to "confront realistically."

One must recall that only 60 years ago Italy proved to be the weakest link in the chain of European democracies. But the moment can come when the issue which in the past appeared to be "democracy *vs*. dictatorship" is nowadays rather paralysis *vs*. capacity-to-act. In the first years of his reign Benito Mussolini did have a number of economic successes because he could make decisions and put them through. When the active democrats in the populace feel themselves depressed and indeed oppressed by weak leadership, by lack of decisive leaders, they will be turning away in droves from the established forces which will be left with little bands of opportunistic clients. Nor does this necessarily mean that the rejection of the "weak State" will imply a turn to a "strong State", red or black; it can also lead to slow but very real decay. From its new status as one of the great European industrial nations, developed, advanced, inventive, Italy could sink further and further into an apathetic backwardness, as a Continental enclave of the Third World.

WITH SUCH WEAKNESS in the foundations, how much can personal energy achieve? Craxi is, no doubt about it, a ball of fire on the current scene, and he has already made out of a declining, decaying political party a functioning entity. Can he write this large on the Italian State and society? Even among his own comrades there are divided counsels and in-fighting—basically on the issue of Italian participation in the new NATO rearmament programme. Craxi's clarity and decisiveness on this question may stand him in good stead. Still, to take over and reorganise a party, the largest among the small ones, and to take over and reorganise a governmental apparatus: these are two separate and profoundly different things.

"*Grinta*" is the word they use about Craxi here, some positively, others negatively; at the moment it sounds as if it were the "in" word of Italy's political vocabulary. And it certainly suits Craxi *il tedesco*, for it is also of Germanic origins, connected with "*grimm*" but also with *grimace*: it can suggest hardness and toughness, as well as a shade of brazen arrogance, and a grimace, "*faccia feroce*" or mask of energy. Whatever he does or does not do, one or the other shades of meaning will be flung Craxi's way. Emilio Colombo (serious, respected head of the Foreign Office) is out; Giulio Andreotti (a manoeuverer) is in in his place—is this *grinta*? And how tough, how resilient is the decision to absorb some hundred thousand extra unexamined applicants into the already bloated administration? . . .

Optimists here plead that compromises have to be taken into consideration if in certain other matters—the life-and-death questions of the economy and the law-and-order struggle against the Mafia and the terrorists—there is to be hope for coordination and effective action. One feels much cheered by the impression that Bettino Craxi has no intention of being a five-month Premier before the old tune for musical chairs sounds again; he has his eyes set on some "historic turning-point." He may well have the *grinta*; he now needs *fortuna*.

F.B.

Dusk, Haslemere

We were playing tennis when the bomb dropped.
We never felt a thing.
It was August, evening. The ball slipped
over the string
without a care in the world, tossed
from pillar to post

by two slightly wooden players.
Janet came down the lawn sipping a drink.
She had tucked up the twins with a kiss and prayers
of a line or two, and cleared the kitchen sink
of remnants from a fine, leisurely meal.
The radio was on. It seemed unreal

when the announcer, interrupting Wagner, said
sombrely that a warhead had detonated,
and that there could be several million dead.
We dropped our rackets, and stood still, sated
with a tired happiness; a sudden chill
took the air. A kestrel eyed the hill

like a child's kite the wind keeps airborne. We
sat around the radio, photogenic,
innocent in our curiosity.
The BBC man told us not to panic.
Geraniums in the borders palely burned.
I pocketed the ball. Wagner returned.

Paul Groves

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How Does It Work?

The City in History—By DAVID CANNADINE

EARLIER THIS YEAR, I WAS TRAVELLING by train in America along the East Coast Corridor from Washington to New Haven. Visually, the most spectacular part of the journey is when, after leaving Penn Station and burrowing under the East River, the train picks its confused and faltering way through the Bronx, and allows the traveller an extended backward glimpse of the Big Apple.

In the distance cluster the concrete stalagmites of the Manhattan skyscrapers, glittering and glinting in the sunlit smog, and waiting patiently for the Monet who never comes, while on each side of the tracks spreads that inchoate jumble of turnpikes, railways, bridges, docks, factories, warehouses and homes which make up the suburban sprawl of Greater New York. Here, embodied in its most spectacular physical form, is the city, Janus-faced as redeemer and betrayer, simultaneously holding out the prospect of the more abundant life and the threat of the more untimely death. From the heights of a Park Avenue apartment block, New York epitomises wealth, opportunity, enjoyment; but from the slums of Brooklyn, it spells poverty, deprivation and misery. My travelling companion contemplated this vast and varied urban vista for a moment, and asked: "How does it all work?"

It was to the answering of this superficially simple but substantively complex question that the late Jim Dyos, to whose influence most of these books bear eloquent and affectionate witness, devoted his professional life. In the 1960s and '70s, his energetic activity as teacher, writer and propagandist established urban history as a new sub-discipline, which exploded with the speed and suddenness of an American frontier town. In 1966, he arranged a conference at Leicester University, the proceedings of which were published as *The Study of Urban History*, which put the subject on the map. Three years earlier, he had founded the Urban History Group, for whom he edited the *Urban History Newsletter*, later extended into the *Urban History Yearbook*. He wrote extensively and stylishly on urban transport and suburban life, and constantly exhorted his colleagues to address the city directly and in its totality, rather than merely incidentally, as passers-by. He edited *The Victorian City: Images and Realities*, a book as bulging and burgeoning as its subject. He planned conferences, founded journals, edited series and commissioned books with the bustle and gusto of a Hollywood mogul. At Leicester University, where he was the first Professor of Urban History in Britain, his office looked more like the headquarters of a shipping line than the study of an academic. When he died too young in 1978, he had established an international reputation as an "academic phenomenon", as "Olympian Dyos", a soubriquet which happily acknowledged both his Greek ancestry and his tycooning talents.

For an outsider, who had left school at fifteen and come late to academe through the army scholarship scheme, it was an achievement of almost Smilesian proportions, as a cottage industry was transformed into a multinational empire through entrepreneurial skill and inspirational zeal. But, as Dyos himself always admitted, he was as much catalyst as creator, for there were deeper reasons why, at this time, history should have gone to town in so emphatic and energetic a manner. In the 1960s and early 1970s, urban life became the focus of public debate and political attention to an extent which had not been known since the 1840s and 1880s. Throughout the Western world, problems of race, poverty and housing attracted social workers, sociologists, planners and politicians, who sought to mobilise the burgeoning resources of welfare-state capitalism to remake the Victorian city in the image of the twentieth century. As the railway viaducts, terraced houses, factories, schools and hospitals were levelled to the ground, and as the high-rise blocks, council houses, urban motorways, shopping malls and multi-storey car parks were put up in their place, it did indeed seem as though the city as destroyer was being destroyed, and that the city as deliverer was being delivered.

URBAN HISTORY AS DEFINED AND DEVELOPED by Dyos was very much the product of this contemporary milieu: conservationist, interdisciplinary and policy-oriented. He believed strongly that the Victorian city was the prototypical modern metropolis, that the way they lived then was the best guide to understanding both the way we live now and the way we yet might live. So he campaigned vigorously to preserve the most important archives and artifacts of the 19th-century city, and constantly sought to build bridges between historians of the urban past, students of the urban present, and planners of the urban future. For he recognised that the city was so vast a phenomenon that urban history could not afford to be an exclusive preserve, but must provide a forum where scholars from many subjects might converge and converse. At Leicester in 1966, he gathered geographers, planners, architects and sociologists, as well as transport, local, municipal, political, social and economic historians, whose collective interests encompassed the city from the early modern period to the present and beyond. Between them, they established the identity of urban history for the next decade: catholic in approach, latitudinarian in ideology, lacking in theoretical rigour, preferring stylish evocation to quantitative analysis, and individual scholarship to group research. *All* that really mattered was the commitment to the city in history: how was it made? what was it like to live in? and what was its function as an autonomous, independent variable in the historical drama?

One of Dyos's major concerns was that the amount of published material which might legitimately be labelled urban

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history was not commensurate with the claims he made and the ambitions he entertained for the subject. In particular, a great deal of interesting and important research was undertaken by graduate students, and lay inaccessibly buried in dissertations. One of the many schemes with which he was toying during the last years of his life was to devise a way of making such work more readily available, and the series *Themes in Urban History* is the posthumous result. The first four volumes, each with several lengthy sections derived from dissertations mostly written in the late 1960s or early '70s, are urban history very much in the Dyos mould: country towns before the Industrial Revolution (Warwick, Ipswich, Winchester and Bath);[1] British town planning from the 1880s to the 1920s (who the planners were, and what they did);[2] the genesis and growth of suburbia (Acton, Chiswick and Ealing, Bromley, Bexley and Headingly),[3] and the municipal politics of great industrial towns (Leeds, Manchester and Bradford).[4] Together, these books greatly extend our knowledge of established subjects in urban history; they are produced and illustrated with characteristic attractiveness by Dyos's home university press; and they are prefaced by elegant, stimulating, well-judged introductions from editors who are experts in each field, and were all friends or protégés of Dyos.

More precisely, these volumes illustrate many of the strengths and weaknesses of the Dyos way of doing and viewing urban history. The book on suburbia, for instance, is written mainly by urban geographers, and that on planning by planners. That disciples of these disciplines are prepared to write for such a series speaks well of Dyos's interdisciplinary endeavours; but there are worrying signs that the authors have neither fully escaped from the straitjackets of their own particular specialisms, nor heeded Dyos's exhortation to address the city directly. The planning contributions are very much Gettysburg scholarship; the history of the planners by the planners for the planners, which tells a relatively narrow, self-enclosed and Whiggish tale of how the profession came to be the way it is, and leaves out such broader historical considerations as ideology, the political milieu, popular pressure, and comparisons with Europe and North America. In the same way, the studies of suburbia are written primarily from the geographer's standpoint: they are not so much concerned, as Dyos was in his history of Camberwell, to relate the general process of urbanisation to its particular manifestation in one place, nor to evoke the sight and sound and smell of a suburban community; rather, their main preoccupation is to test and illustrate morphological theories, which leads to over-schematic accounts pitched at rather an arid and abstract level. In more senses than one, this is only semi-detached urban history.

The contributions to the other two *Themes* volumes are more conventionally historical, and are far more sensitive to, and concerned with, the city as the substantive historical variable. Here the problems are more those of the thesis than of the discipline. In both cases there is much meticulous research and detailed description, but rather less explanation, argument, hypothesis and generalisation. And, as with the planners and the geographers, the prose rarely attains the lucid level of the editors' introductions or Dyos's own work. With the conspicuous and exemplary exception of Gatrell's essay on the middle classes and incorporation in Manchester, the volume on municipal reform looks at the working of local government in Leeds and the politics of local government in Bradford well within the familiar perspective established by E. P. Hennock and Asa Briggs. And the second-ranking towns which form the subject of Peter Clark's volume are so diverse in their history, and have left behind such dubious data concerning population, poverty and occupation that it is difficult to gain any overall impression of what it all adds up to. Taken together, these volumes are useful and informative rather than seminal or exciting, adding to our knowledge but not transforming our understanding of the urban past. To the extent that this is what Dyos had in mind, the objective is admirably achieved: but it is not entirely clear where any of these subjects goes from here.

IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF EVENTS, that would not matter, for historical research is necessarily a slow, accretive, and evolutionary process. But the decade which has elapsed since most of the original work on which these volumes rest was completed has witnessed major changes in the urban milieu—and in urban history too. Like their Victorian predecessors, the remodelled cities of the '60s and early '70s have only partially lived up to their promise of abundance, equality and modernity: we have seen their future of concrete jungles, vandalised shopping malls, blighted council-house estates, and slums in the sky—and have decided that in many ways it doesn't work. And this urban disillusionment, combined with the tighter purse-strings of Thatcherism and Reaganomics, means that the government and the planners have neither the will nor the wherewithal to rebuild cities again. Even the sociologists have rather lost interest: they no longer see the city as an autonomous subject, *sui generis*, to be addressed directly, but rather as the dependant variable, the outcome of larger forces which should be studied instead. In global terms, the urbanisation process seems to be slowing down, and in Britain the economic base of many of our once-great cities seems eroded beyond repair. In one way and another, we increasingly live in a de-industrialising, post-urban world, beyond the factory and beyond metropolis, and the implications for urban history are mildly disquieting. For while economic history can survive without industry, it is rather more difficult for urban history to survive without the city.

To make matters worse, Dyos was not only the first but also the last tycoon: when he died, Leicester University did not establish his personal chair, a decision which it would be polite to label small-minded and more accurate to call a disgrace. In the last year of his life, Dyos had become increasingly concerned that the urban history boom was about to burst; that the subject was losing its coherence, confidence, identity and direction; and that the contraction in the numbers of graduate students was draining away its life-blood. Accordingly, he determined to launch another super-conference, to chart the progress made since the seminal Leicester meeting, and to give the subject a shot in the arm for the next decade.

The conference duly took place in August 1980 and, suitably rewritten, reorganised and augmented, the proceedings now appear as *The Pursuit of Urban History*,[5] a work which may

[1] *Country Towns in Pre-Industrial England*. Edited by PETER CLARK. Leicester University Press, £14.00.

[2] *British Town Planning: The Formative Years*. Edited by ANTHONY SUTCLIFFE. Leicester University Press, £14.00.

[3] *The Rise of Suburbia*. Edited by F. L. M. THOMPSON. Leicester University Press, £22.00.

[4] *Municipal Reform and the Industrial City*. Edited by DEREK FRASER. Leicester University Press, £12.00.

[5] *The Pursuit of Urban History*. Edited by DEREK FRASER and ANTHONY SUTCLIFFE. Edward Arnold, £35.00.

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turn out to be as much a milestone in the subject's progress as was *The Study of Urban History* a decade and a half before. In terms of personnel, there has been a major change: only two of those who wrote in the earlier volume appear in its successor; a new generation of urban historians can be glimpsed emerging; and the coverage is much more international in scope. In terms of subjects, too, there has been a major shift of emphasis, away from the old Dyos staples. While the *Themes* series is an attractive retrospective of urban history done the Dyos way, the *Pursuit* volume is a stimulating foretaste of the shape of things to come.

Whether by accident or by design, there is an ambiguity about the title of this volume which reflects urban history's current condition: self-questioning, still in mourning, and awkwardly if excitingly caught between two different generations of practitioners. Is urban history the object or the agent of pursuit? Is this book about the search for a subject, or the study of the subject? Two-thirds of it (too much) is largely devoted to the methodological part of these questions. Part One asks whether there is such a thing as *urban* history. Are *all* towns fundamentally the same, regardless of their location in time and space? Is *any* town fundamentally the same a hundred years on or two centuries before? Is a town a town whatever it is, something so self-evidently commonsensical that the question is mere pedantry?

TODAY IT SEEMS LESS EASY to answer these questions with positive conviction than was possible in Dyos's time. And clearly, if it is difficult to make the case for anything being exclusively or generically urban, then it becomes even harder to argue for the subject of urban *history*. In Part Three, this problem is confronted more explicitly. Some critics have argued that it is no more than a bandwagon, a spurious exercise in interdisciplinarianism, falsely claiming credit for work that would have been done in any case under more traditional labels. And others have noted that, in a Western world where the vast majority of the population had been urbanised for well over a century, urban history is merely an empty, shorthand term for the history of everything and of everyday life.

The chest-baring and navel-gazing to which such questions give rise are not without their uses: but they do seem to be taken to excess here, if only because many of urban history's present doubts and difficulties are by no means exclusive to itself, but are in large part the result of external circumstances rather than internal weaknesses. Most subjects in the social sciences and the humanities are in crisis at the moment, with diminished government funding, early retirement, reductions in the number of Ph.D. students and drops in undergraudate enrolment, and many of Clio's offspring are at least as self-questioning and divided as urban history. Economic history is riven with methodological disagreement; social history is as sharply split ideologically; women's history still searches for intellectual coherence; Third World history has fragmented almost to the point of disintegration; and much ostensibly political and constitutional history is really social history under another name. In short, urban history seems neither more nor less healthy than most historical sub-specialisms at the moment. The only real difference is that, compared with these other subjects, it lacks those professors, journals and courses which ensure that it will go on whether people believe in what they are doing or not. If urban history were more securely entrenched and established within the structure of university history teaching, much of this *angst* and anxiety would evaporate.

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In any case, when it comes to doing the subject rather than searching for it, urban historians produce excellent and fascinating work, which convinces by its merits if not necessarily by its label. Part Two of *The Pursuit of Urban History* is happily devoted to this more substantial purpose, with eight essays, impressively indebted to the cumulative labours of urban historians over the last decade, and drawing with confident and comforting alertness on the insights of the most influential academic disciplines of the moment: semiotics, structuralism and anthropology. Studies of the urban fabric and municipal government have been superseded by investigations of civic ceremonial and antiquarian boosters; the heroes of *The Study of Urban History* were Robert Park and Asa Briggs, but now it is Clifford Geertz and Michel Foucault who hold the stage; and the single city to which scholars turn most often for inspiration is no longer early 20th-century Chicago but late 20th-century Calcutta. So the current concerns are with the management of public and private space, with kinship, the family and gender division, with total institutions and urban culture, with subjective perception and structures of meaning, and with urban ideology, images and ideas. Here are subjects and questions every bit as lively and as topical as those addressed over a decade ago, offering (as Dyos had hoped) emphatic evidence that, in the anxiety-ridden early 1980s, it is easier to renew urban history than it is to reverse urban decay.

From very different standpoints, two essays in particular address themselves to the past, present and future of urban history and urban life with the sort of broad perspective which Dyos most favoured. Eric Lampard, in the most substantial contribution to the book, offers convincing evidence that, in global terms, the urbanisation process is virtually at an end, and that, in Western Europe, the impact of high technology is breaking that link between cities and industry which has been taken for granted since the early years of the industrial revolution. And the result, as Donald Olsen argues in a characteristically stylish piece of urban evocation, is that cities may now be reverting to their pre-industrial functions as works of art, symbols of prestige, centres for conspicuous consumption, and domes of pleasure. Juvenal's Rome, rather than Dickens' Coketown, may be the urban paradigm of the future, already foreshadowed in the Denver of *Dynasty* and the Dallas of *Dallas*. But, *pace* the pessimists, the end of the urbanisation process as it has taken place over the last 200 years does not mean the end of urban history. For if the city is once again to be remade and refashioned, this time in the image of the microchip rather than the planner, then we shall need more urban history, not less.

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The development of the subject from the one Leicester conference to the other is illustrated by looking at the work of and *Festschrift* for S. G. Checkland, one of only two historians who contributed both to *The Study* and *The Pursuit*. His essay in the earlier volume was in the main a catalogue of what might and should be done; but his contribution to the second book is more a list of what has actually been accomplished. In the course of this transformation, Checkland himself has been a major figure. An economic historian by training, he began to write urban history early in the 1950s, before Dyos had articulated the subject at all. His work on the Gladstone family took him to Liverpool, his studies of banking and finance led him to the City, and his Dyos-like activity in Glasgow local affairs encouraged him to write a beguiling, poignant pen-portrait of the rise and fall of that town. Appropriately enough, the *Festschrift* which marks his retirement from the Chair of Economic History at Glasgow University[6] contains a section devoted to urban history, with two slightly old-fashioned essays on urban government and morphology, and two reflecting more recent interests in urban perception and the urban environment.

Another Scottish signpost to urban history's future is *Order and Space in Society*,[7] a multi-authored book which addresses the problem of the social and political values which urban architecture (especially in Glasgow and Edinburgh) embodies and articulates. The concern with ideology and total institutions establishes it emphatically as a post-Dyos book, although the attempt by architects to get outside the constraints and presuppositions of their own profession is certainly something he would have welcomed. The strength of this book is that it suggests an approach to the making of the urban fabric which is potentially far more valuable than the endless replication of studies of suburban development of government building. But the weaknesses of this particular example suggests it will need careful handling if its potential is to be realised. Here, for all the architectural insights, the historical context seems rather thin, there is too much jargon

[6] *Business, Banking and Urban History: Essays in Honour of S. G. Checkland*. Edited by Anthony Slaven and Derek Aldcroft. John Donald (138 St Stephen Street, Edinburgh EH3 5AA), £15.00.

[7] *Order and Space in Society: Architectural Form and Its Context in the Scottish Enlightenment*. Edited by Thomas A. Markus. Mainstream Publishing (25a South West Thistle Street Lane, Edinburgh EH2 1EW), £20.00.

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and too many schematised layers of meaning, and the pictures are not well integrated into the text. Nor is it possible to establish wholly satisfactory links between urban and architectural form, and social and political values. In Glasgow, the grid system of streets seems to have embodied one set of beliefs, but in Edinburgh's New Town a similar structure seems to have stood for something entirely different.

These seven books between them embody the work of 47 scholars from three continents, and add up to nearly 2,000 pages. A subject which can generate so much interest and so much output can hardly be said to be dying. On the contrary, it has more in common with the burgeoning cities of the American sun belt than with the decaying dinosaurs of the North-east. Indeed, as this wealth of material makes abundantly clear, urban history bears a striking resemblance to that very process of urban growth which it is one of its prime purposes to describe and explain. In some ways it is sprawling, congested, uneven, overcrowded, with too much speculation, some jerry-building and occasional cul-de-sacs. But in others it is imaginatively conceived, well-constructed and vigorously executed, full of life and promise. If God made the countryside, then agricultural history is merely another branch of theology, best left to country parsons. But since it is incontrovertible that mankind made the town, there must always be urban historians prepared to answer the city-dweller's question: how does it all work?

Recessional or Progressional?

After Empire—*By* JOHN GRIGG

THOUGH AS YET THERE IS NO SIGN of a Mommsen or a Gibbon for the British Empire, the subject seems to be attracting more and more interest as it recedes into the past. How did the Empire come about? What exactly was it? Why did it disintegrate so quickly? Which of its achievements are likely to prove permanent? Such questions are now increasingly discussed, and in a spirit no longer warped by contemporary passion and prejudice.

Britain's imperial destiny was not determined by geography in the way that America's or Russia's was. There was no vast and contiguous land-mass into which the British could expand. At the beginning of their adventure they were a small island community, whose only medium for expansion was the sea. They explored, settled and traded, in the process fighting European neighbours who were their commercial rivals, and who were also capable of threatening their island base. In their wars with Spain, Holland and France they were fighting, therefore, not only for control of trading-posts and trade routes, but also, and at the same time, for national survival. It was a game for the highest stakes, win or lose, and in the end the British turned out to be the big winners. After the Napoleonic war Britain became, in effect, the world's first super-power, and as such was virtually unchallenged for at least half a century.

This status was, however, only partly due to the supremacy of the Royal Navy on every ocean, and to the number and variety of British dependencies on land—more especially the greatest of all, India, whose teeming population compensated for Britain's limited manpower. Even more important as a cause of world dominance was the economic miracle known as the Industrial Revolution, in which the British were outright pioneers and of which they were the original beneficiaries. The assumption that colonies were vital, and that the mother country's prosperity depended upon a centrally controlled mercantilist system, underlay what is known as the first British empire, but did not long survive the secession of the American colonies. Pitt the Younger demonstrated that Britain could get along very well without them, and in the following century the triumphant doctrine of Free Trade was combined with a genuinely anti-imperialist ideology.

Even towards the end of the century and in the Edwardian period, when economic and political liberalism no longer seemed the magic formula that it had seemed earlier, and when the British began to feel distinctly insecure, they did not turn wholeheartedly to an alternative creed. Despite growing competition from the protectionist United States and German Empire, they were not swept off their feet by Joseph Chamberlain's campaign for Tariff Reform and imperial consolidation; and despite their sense of military weakness and vulnerability, they did not follow those who advocated conscription and a large army. It is fair to say that, with the British public as a whole, imperialism never really caught on.

The same was true of most politicians and writers. A few might beat the imperial drum, but they were the exceptions. Most tended to take the Empire for granted, but could easily be embarrassed by any show of enthusiasm for it. Throughout the imperial phase of Britain's history the prevailing mystique of the country—as expressed by poets, for instance—remained firmly insular and Arcadian. Even the most ostensibly imperialist of all British writers, Rudyard Kipling, retreated after a time to Sussex and became as much a poet of Old England as of Greater Britain, celebrating the virtues of oak and ash and thorn rather than those of palm and pine, and substituting the road through the woods for the road to Mandalay. It is surely significant, too, that one of the most famous of all his poems on the theme of empire, "Recessional," should have been a solemn warning against imperial hubris.

During Britain's heyday as a super-power the Empire as such was only part of the area of the world that the British actually controlled. As Bernard Porter points out in an interesting new book, *Britain, Europe and the World,*[1] there was an informal empire which far exceeded the formal, and which they could far more easily reconcile with their liberal convictions. They would, indeed, have liked to see the formal empire wither away, but instead they were fated to see it grow until it reached its greatest extent between the two World Wars—when its demise was, in fact, imminent. This apparent paradox is well explained by Porter:

[1] *Britain, Europe and the World: Delusions of Grandeur.* By BERNARD PORTER. George Allen & Unwin, £10.

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> "Britain was not extending her frontiers but defending them: defending them by formalising them, which is what created the illusion of expansion. . . . Britain could not afford to defend all her 'informal' interests in the world; some therefore she had to give up, if the effort of defending them seemed more than they were worth. So, in a way, what appeared to be an expansion of her power and influence in the world was actually a contraction."

By the time red was most conspicuous on the map, Britain's super-power status was on the wane. The *real* decline of British power, relative to that of certain other countries, had begun much earlier, and was concealed rather than counteracted by the formal acquisition of territory.

IF THERE HAD BEEN NO Second World War the decline would, no doubt, have been more gradual. Britain's accumulated wealth would have been less swiftly eroded, and it should have been possible for her to sustain an imperial role for rather longer. Other powers would have emerged more slowly, and there would have been no revolutionary change in the balance of power. But in World War II Britain was defeated no less surely, though less painfully, than Germany and Japan. Apparently a victor, she was in fact a victim of the War. America and Russia, apparently her allies, were united in eagerness to see the British Empire dismantled. (At Teheran, Roosevelt engaged in anti-British talk with Stalin behind Churchill's back.) At the end of the War Britain may still have seemed to be a superpower, but in reality was one no longer. That role had passed to the two giants whose eventual primacy Tocqueville had long before predicted; and the fact that they were soon to become deadly rivals did nothing to arrest or delay Britain's demotion.

Until the end of the War the truth about Britain's relative position was to some extent concealed by Churchill's towering personality and prestige, and by the need to humour British susceptibilities. But in terms of actual power the "Big Three" conception was always a myth—"Big Two-and-a-Half" would have been nearer the truth—and even if Churchill had won the 1945 election he would scarcely have managed any better than the unspectacular Clement Attlee in maintaining a semblance of parity for Britain in the immediate post-War period. It would have been quite out of the question to hold India, even if we had tried to do so, and Britain's economic dependence upon the United States would have been just as manifest as it was under Labour. Indeed, the Americans might have felt the need to treat Britain even more toughly than they did, to prove that they were not under Churchill's spell. When he returned to power in 1951 his attempts to revive the old wartime summitry were conspicuously unsuccessful, and the Americans, though friendly and respectful, made it clear that he could not count upon any exclusive "special relationship" with them.

Incidentally, there was a paradox in Churchill's position in the supreme emergency of 1940, which should be noted for its bearing upon the argument of this piece. Though he was a thoroughgoing old-fashioned imperialist, his appeal to the beleaguered British at that time owed little, if anything, to his imperialism, and almost everything to the note of insular patriotism that he so memorably struck. The British were not, in fact, alone in 1940. They had the full support of the self-governing dominions, freely given, and the less voluntary, though on the whole no less cordial, support of the dependent Empire. But all this fired their imagination much less than the idea of being completely alone. In the famous speech in which Churchill used the phrase "their finest hour" the reference was to "the British Empire and Commonwealth", and to what people would say of its performance in 1940 even if it were to last a thousand years. But what mattered to the British was their own survival, and they have appropriated the phrase to themselves—oblivious of the fact that the Empire virtually disappeared within 25 years, and that the Commonwealth has lost the prefix British. They liked what Churchill said about fighting on the beaches and in the hills, while any mention of the Empire was, to them, no more than an oratorical flourish.

IF THE METROPOLITAN BRITISH had cared more about the Empire, and if their statesmen over two centuries had pursued more enlightened policies towards it, could it have lasted longer? Many still believe that if the American colonies had not been lost the Empire might have gone from strength to strength; and that they would probably not have been lost if the views of Chatham and Burke had prevailed. This conventional wisdom is challenged in *The Fall of the First British Empire*,[2] a new book about the conflict leading to the American secession, in which the authors argue that the colonists' demands were irreconcilable with the minimal requirements of any British statesmen at the time. The argument is not entirely original, since the authors themselves quote Namier's remark that the ideas of Burke and his friends were "no less hierarchical and authoritarian than those of George III and Lord North." Yet they state the case with impressive cogency, disposing once and for all of any oversimplified belief in the avoidability of American independence.

It is anachronistic to suggest that the constitutional formula evolved more than half a century later for Canada would have been available for settling the dispute between Britain and the American colonists. One would not have been possible without the other. It was only because the Americans had rebelled, and rebelled successfully, that a British government was prepared to act upon Lord Durham's proposal that Canada should have responsible self-government under the Crown; or for that matter, that Durham was capable of making such a proposal. Moreover the second British Empire, with its Free Trade ideology, would never have emerged if Britain had remained convinced that the old mercantilism was necessary to its prosperity. And nothing could have been more effective in removing that conviction, and replacing it by another, than the experience of continued and growing prosperity without the American colonies.

In any case the concession of responsible self-government to those colonies, even under the Crown, would surely have resulted, sooner or later, in a fundamental transformation of the British Empire. The middle section of the North American continent, with its vast size and resources, was destined to become a community far richer and more populous than Britain. It was also destined to be far more varied in its ethnic character, because the open spaces of America were bound to attract immigrants from many other countries. If America had stayed within the Empire, as a self-governing dominion on the (later) Canadian model, it would inevitably have developed as an alternative and rival metropolis in the British imperial system.

[2] *The Fall of the First British Empire: Origins of the War of American Independence*. By ROBERT W. TUCKER and DAVID C. HENDRICKSON. Johns Hopkins University Press. $31.20. £19.

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That is what it can be said to have done anyway, in all but name. If two most important distinguishing marks of an empire are a common language and law, then the Americans did not, in reality, leave the British Empire when they won their independence, but rather set up their own extension of it in a new continent. And despite its ethnic diversity the American version became culturally homogeneous in a way that the later British Empire was not. It was the policy of the American empire-builders to impose a single language, English, and a legal system based upon that of England. Having virtually wiped out the indigenous population, they made sure that every new American citizen, whatever his cultural background, should be homogenised in the proverbial melting-pot. Only in recent years has this process been modified for the benefit of—or at any rate under pressure from—the very large numbers of Hispanic immigrants, and the departure from principle may perhaps be regarded as rather ominous.

By contrast the later British Empire, consisting as it did of many territories and communities spread over the whole world, rather than of people concentrated in a single landmass, did not attempt to impose a uniform pattern. It was significant that of the two major recommendations in the Durham Report on Canada the one on self-government was carried out, while the one proposing elimination of the separate French culture in Quebec was ignored. Similarly, after Britain's Pyrrhic victory in the Boer War, the Afrikaners were left free to use their own language in schools and courts of law; and after the South African Union was formed in 1910 they soon established a political hold over the new country which has not been broken to this day. Even in the dependent empire Britain's cultural impact was less powerful than, for instance, that of the French in their empire. A doctrine of Indirect Rule was propounded, according to which subject peoples were to be interfered with as little as possible in the use of their traditional laws and customs. (Indirect Rule may to some extent have been copied from the Romans, since an outstanding exponent of it was a certain procurator of Judaea in his handling of a well-known case.)

Apart from America, the other great question-mark in British imperial history concerns policy towards India. Would it have been feasible to accelerate the pace of India's constitutional advance and, if so, would the general consequences, for the subcontinent and the world, have been better? The answer to both these questions is surely, yes. It was the proudest boast of the British in India that they had unified the congeries of religions, races and feudal sovereignties that they found there. Yet in the act of departure they destroyed the unity that they could claim to have created, and since then a further fragmentation has occurred in the revolt of East Pakistan and its emergence as the separate state of Bangladesh.

Part of the blame for the destruction of Indian unity may be fixed on the Indians themselves, but only part. Essentially the failure to hand over power to a united India represents a failure of British statesmanship in the 20th century. The moment of supreme opportunity was the end of the First World War, when Hindus and Muslims were relatively united, when a large enough Indian élite existed to run the country, and when India's contribution to the War effort had put Britain under a clear obligation to show magnanimity in return. The Secretary of State for India at the time, Edwin Montagu, knew that the right policy was to give India the status of a self-governing

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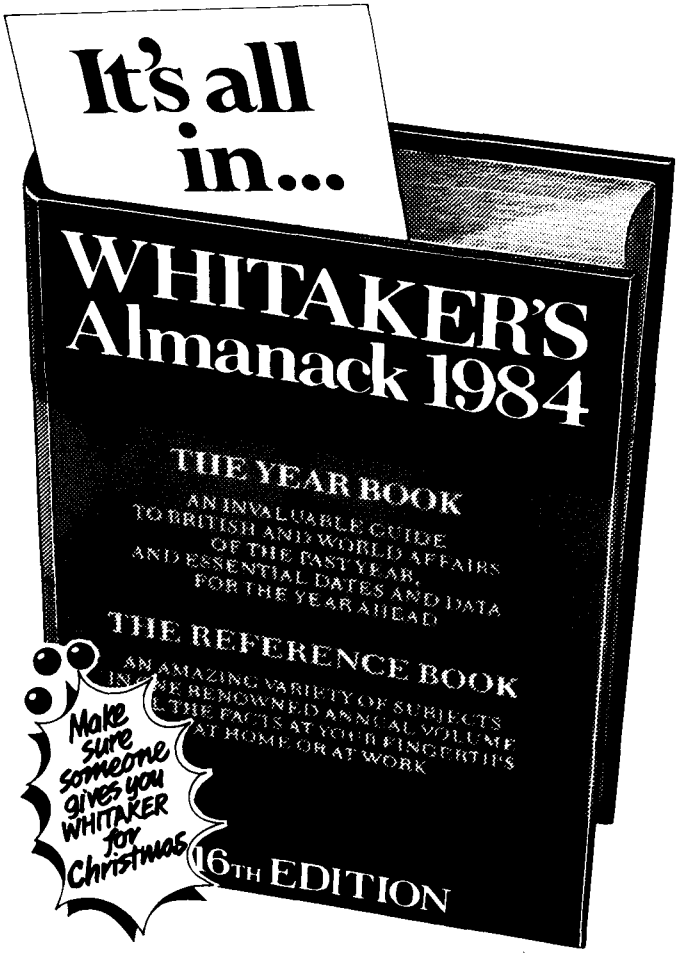
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dominion there and then, whatever the difficulties and whatever the risks. But he did not get his way. The Lloyd George coalition in which he was serving was sustained by a large Conservative majority, and Lloyd George himself was at best ambivalent on the subject of Indian freedom. As a result, the so-called Montagu-Chelmsford reforms (Chelmsford was the name of the inadequate Viceroy) disappointed legitimate Indian hopes and ushered in a period of deadlock and frustration.

A further, though not quite so promising, chance existed during the Second World War. But again it was thrown away. India was brought into the War on the mere word of the British government, without even the courtesy of consultation with elected Indian leaders. Then Churchill became Prime Minister, which—in view of his record of implacable hostility to Indian nationalism—was hardly auspicious. After the fall of Singapore, and under pressure from the Americans, even he had to go through the motions of a constitutional initiative in India. But Sir Stafford Cripps, who was entrusted with the mission, had no real freedom to negotiate, and the Indian Congress leaders were, in the circumstances, less tractable than they might have been earlier. So the mission failed. Soon afterwards the Congress leaders were all incarcerated, and the Muslim League, whose leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was bent on securing a separate Muslim state, had abundant scope for improving its position. To make matters worse, Churchill appointed as Viceroy the intelligent and well-meaning, but politically inept, Field-Marshal Wavell, with explicit instructions that there should be a moratorium on politics until after the War. These developments put paid to any hope of preserving Indian unity when the British withdrew.

ALL THE SAME, the British Raj has much to its credit, and two new books on it, though very different in style and treatment, agree in suggesting that it was, on balance, a good thing. Geoffrey Moorhouse's *India Britannica*[3] is so lavishly illustrated that it can almost be described as a picture book, but the accompanying text is exceptionally well worth reading, not least because it is thoughtful and fair. In Moorhouse's view the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms "came just a bit too late", and he regards the arbitrary declaration of war on behalf of India in 1939 as "an old imperial reflex of the Raj." Yet his account of the British legacy in India, though sober and discriminating, is on the whole very favourable.

Karl de Schweinitz Jr., approaching the subject in an analytical and schematic manner, seems to come to much the same conclusion in *The Rise and Fall of British India.*[4] He has a good word for the long-term effect of Macaulay's Education Minute, as well as for that of his more generally praised legal code. And as for economics, he implies that though "India's economic interest was not the primary goal of British rule", Indians would probably have been no better served even by enlightened indigenous rulers. It can hardly be denied that the achievement of the British in India was that of an incredibly small number of people, which would have been impossible if the great mass of Indians had not largely acquiesced in their rule.

If India had become fully self-governing between the wars

[3] *India Britannica.* By GEOFFREY MOORHOUSE. Harvill Press, £12.95.

[4] *The Rise and Fall of British India: Imperialism as Inequality.* By KARL DE SCHWEINITZ, JR. Methuen, £13.50, paper £6.95.

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there would have been little danger of India deciding to be neutral in the second struggle, or of the massive support of the Indian army (in any case an all-volunteer force) being denied to the British and their cause. Among Indian leaders the most important, at the level of practical politics, was Jawaharlal Nehru; and he was a passionate democrat and anti-Nazi. Many others shared his outlook, and even Gandhi—though by then a thoroughgoing pacifist, as he certainly had not been during the First World War—would have been most reluctant to embarrass Britain, for which he always had a soft spot. (Besides, he no longer exerted anything like his former authority over Congress. Moorhouse is surely wrong to suggest that he pushed Nehru and others into rejecting the Cripps offer against their better judgment. In Dr Gopal's official biography of Nehru the reasons for dismissing this view are cogently stated.) There would have been no de Valera syndrome in India, but on the other hand a *free* India participating in the War would have been a priceless political asset to set against Chiang Kai-shek's China, which the Americans were able spuriously to promote as the major Asian power on the Allied side.

Even though unduly delayed, and therefore accompanied by the tragedy of partition, Indian independence did bring into being a third metropolis belonging, in vital respects, to the British tradition; and one which, unlike the United States, remains formally linked with Britain, and most other nations of the same tradition, through the Commonwealth. The key elements of law and language are still recognisably shared, and there is at least a chance that they will not disappear, but will become more firmly rooted as time goes on. The rule of law has been under serious pressure in recent years, but Indians are naturally litigious and endowed with a sense of fair play which, though it has to compete with other instincts, makes them value the system of law inherited from the Raj.

As for language, English is still spoken by only a small minority of Indians, but their importance is out of all proportion to their numbers, and it seems likely that more and more Indians will wish to learn English, more especially in the South (where Hindi is resented as the national language, and where English would be much preferred). The advantages of speaking a genuine world *lingua franca* will surely be increasingly apparent to a people of outstanding intelligence, who are so conscious of their own antiquity as a civilised community that they can afford to rise above petty chauvinism.

BUT FOR A NOTABLE ABSENCE OF small-mindedness on India's part, the Commonwealth would never have existed in its present form; and it is fitting that its present (very successful) Secretary-General, the Guyanan S.S. Ramphal, should be a member of the Indian diaspora. The Commonwealth could never have been, and never could be, a power bloc. In that sense it is no substitute for the superpower that the British Empire once was. But like the United Nations it is a valuable adjunct to diplomacy, and its more restricted membership, combined with a degree of cultural and institutional homogeneity not to be found in the UN, gives it a value that the world organisation lacks.

Britain should by now have learnt to appreciate the usefulness of Commonwealth links. In the early days British politicians and the British public simply did not see the point.

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Half-expecting newly independent states to behave as though still dependent, they were irritated by superficial manifestations while failing to perceive underlying goodwill and readiness to cooperate. A sad instance occurred in the Suez crisis of 1956. If the British had worked closely with the Indians, instead of trying to impose a Western solution on Egypt, they would have emerged from the crisis with honour, and with their legitimate interests safeguarded. The Indian government had as much reason as the British for wishing to ensure free passage through the Suez canal, but it could also sympathise with Nasser's desire to assert Egyptian freedom, and did not regard him as an agent of Moscow or another Mussolini. Krishna Menon's proposals for settling the dispute were the most sensible put forward, but they were rejected by Eden in favour of a futile attempt to involve the Americans in coercing Egypt, and then, when the Americans shrank from using force, in a miserable collusive adventure with the French and Israelis. The opportunity to let the new Commonwealth prove its worth was thrown away. All the same, it should be noted that the prime British motive was not imperialistic—as many in the Third World believed at the time—but the traditional insular motive of self-preservation. Eden managed to convince the British that their industries would be strangled if the Suez Canal were run by Egyptians.

Recently British governments have gained immensely by availing themselves of Commonwealth cooperation. The Rhodesian settlement owed much to it, and in the Falklands affair the promptness and completeness of Commonwealth solidarity were remarkable. British membership of the European Community has, moreover, helped the Commonwealth's evolution in that it has removed any suspicion that Britain might be hankering after a neo-imperial role.

THE BRITISH DID NOT HANKER AFTER SUCH a role for the future, having never, in fact, set much store by imperialism in the past. But they do care very much about being free, and about having the means (if not always the inclination) to prosper. They also tend to assume that Britain is a great power, and the assumption is still justified if we draw a proper distinction between great powers and imperial or superpowers. However, the distinction is often not drawn, as for instance in the title of Keith Robbins's most helpful and informative study of British history from 1870 to 1970, *The Eclipse of a Great Power*,[5] though Robbins admits that what makes a great power "is clearly debatable and different criteria produce different results."

If Britain were just an ordinary power, but still a power, then how should we describe Spain? If no power at all, then how should we describe most of the world's countries, which have flags and embassies but little else? From the vantage-point of the 21st century it may be judged that British greatness survived the loss of empire, as of the economic primacy which contributed more than the Empire to making Britain a superpower; and that the British Empire was transformed into a constellation of states, great and small, including one that became imperial (the United States), three with a metropolitan character (Britain, the United States, and India), and many freely associated in a powerless but influential group called the Commonwealth. Will this be seen as recession, or as an unprecedented example of evolutionary progress?

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[5] *The Eclipse of a Great Power*. By KEITH ROBBINS. Longman, £14.95, paper £7.50.

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Yoked to the Past

The State of Archaeology—By DAVID MILES

"THE PAST IS A FOREIGN COUNTRY . . . they do things differently there", wrote L. P. Hartley at the beginning of *The Go-Between*. And certainly, in spite of two decades of intensive epistemological debate, archaeological theory and practice still vary considerably around the world. There is very little agreement on what constitutes a scientific approach—or even whether such a thing is desirable.

The past is both powerful and personal. It is and has been intimately entangled with nationalist movements, religious dogma, political postures, and ideology, so the search for the Holy Grail of archaeological objectivity necessitates illuminating the history of the observer's own subject. *Archaeology in Central Europe: The First 500 Years*, by the Czech archaeologist Karel Sklenář,[1] is a welcome addition to the growing number of studies of the historical development of archaeology. Central Europe is defined as the land east of the Rhine, west of the USSR, and north of the Balkans. Today this incorporates the two Germanies, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, and part of Yugoslavia and Rumania; in the 19th century it formed the territory of two great empires: the Austro-Hungarian and the German. The area is a complex one to survey and synthesise, not least because of its linguistic variety and cultural diversity.

As the first work in English on this subject, Sklenář's book is valuable and often fascinating, although it is frustrating that the first five centuries take us to 1945 and no further. The bulk of Sklenář's work deals with the 19th century, and sad reading much of it makes, for the overwhelming impression is of archaeology as "a weapon in the arsenal of the national consciousness." The rise of Germany stirred educated Germans ("like reindeer in the spring", as E. M. Arndt wrote in 1816) to look to the sources of their history. The victory of Arminius over Varus's three legions in AD 9 became the great mythic German event. The bellicose Germani were metamorphosed into an ideal of national virtues—given classical authority by an uncritical and selective acceptance of Tacitus's moralising *Germania*—and graves containing weapons were automatically associated with them. The weapons themselves took on a new edge in the battlefield of contemporary politics, as archaeological find spots provided justification for claiming supposedly ancestral territory.

In the early 19th century, Slavic peoples also constructed a Romantic image of their own past—at least those who were free to do so. In Poland, in 1824, W. Surowiecki published *Seeking the Origins of the Slav Peoples*, and in 1836 F. Palacký's *History of the Czech Nation* appeared. The Slavs could not resort to Tacitus, but they did nevertheless project their own myth: peaceful farmers "of a dove-like nature" in contrast with the aggressive Germans.

Ethnocentricity dominated the study of the past in the "Romantic" period, but by the 1860s a more analytical and anthropological approach was developing. Professor Rudolph Virchow, the leading figure in the German empirical school, expressed it as "the search for the pure, nameless individual." The term prehistory (*Vorgeschichte*), in the sense of an international, scientific, anti-chauvinistic discipline, came into use at this time.

Although Sklenář has little to say about the effects of Central European archaeology on the discipline in the rest of the world, Virchow was an important figure for his influence on Franz Boas and consequently on American anthropology. Boas wrote of Virchow in what might almost be called glowing tones, were it not that they reflect his own glacial, pure attitude to the sacred pursuit of science:

> "The sound progress of science requires of us to be clear at every moment, what elements in the system of science are hypothetical and what are the limits of that knowledge which is obtained by exact observation . . . many an impetuous student has felt his [Virchow's] quiet and cautious criticism as an obstacle to progress. On this account he has suffered many hostile attacks—until generally the progress of research showed that the cautious master was right in rejecting the far-reaching conclusion based on imperfect evidence. There are but few students who possess that cold enthusiasm for truth that enables them to be always clearly conscious of the sharp line between attractive theory and the observation that has been secured by hard and earnest work."[2]

Through his German intellectual background Boas introduced a rigorous conservative empiricism into American anthropology, an obsession with data collection, and an abhorrence of generalisation. For Margaret Mead, one of his pupils, Boas was "the man who made anthropology a science." In Germany, however, Virchow's scientific approach succumbed to the rising tide of nationalism. The formation of the German Empire in 1871, under the Emperor Wilhelm I and Chancellor Bismarck, stimulated the old romantic German spirit. Changing attitudes can be seen in changing language. *Vorgeschichte* had the sense of "before history", the study of humanity as a whole. The term which replaced it—*Urgeschichte*—implied the study of the roots of *German* history.

The leading advocate of *Urgeschichte* was the dreadful Gustaf Kossinna. Not all German prehistorians supported his brand of retrograde and racist antiquarianism—the typological studies of the Swede Oscar Montelius were continued and improved by Paul Reinecke (1872–1958), who produced a detailed sequence for the Central European Bronze and Iron Age. Nevertheless, it was Kossinna who had government support, and not surprisingly: his distribution maps of "German" artefacts were used as vehicles of imperial

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[1] *Archaeology in Central Europe: The First 500 Years.* By KAREL SKLENÁŘ. Leicester University Press, £16.50.

[2] "Rudolph Virchow's Anthropological Work", Franz Boas, *Science* 16 (1902), pp 441–45.

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expansionism. The myths were revived. When Field-Marshal von Hindenburg visited Kossinna's first (and only) excavation, he pronounced, "As we gaze at this ancient German culture we must realise once again that we shall only remain German so long as we keep our swords keen and our young men battle-worthy!"

Kossinna died in 1931, but his influence remained strong in Nazi Germany. Virchow's German Anthropological Society disappeared, but the Society for German Prehistory, founded by Kossinna, prospered under the new name of The Reich Union for German Prehistory. "Undesirables" were out. One of these, Gerhart Bersu, came to Britain and played an important part in improving British excavation techniques. Under the Nazis, Kossinna's vulgarised perversion of prehistory flourished: new chairs were created, the subject was taught in schools and the army, and excavation was funded by the *SS*. Other pasts were not allowed to exist. In Poland, during the War, about 25% of the archaeologists were killed, many archaeological journals were destroyed, the State Archaeological Museum in Warsaw was broken up, and the country's most famous site, the great Iron Age timber fort at Biskupin, was smashed by the *SS*.

Surprisingly perhaps, the voice of German scientific archaeology was not entirely silenced. Von Schuchhardt's *The Prehistory of Germany,* first published in 1928, was reprinted in its fifth edition in 1943, its language slightly modified, with an introduction stating: "We lack a real history of prehistoric Germany. The works which present these and similar titles in reality only present the prehistory of the Germani, as chauvinist in their attitude as possible."

CHAUVINISM, IRRATIONALISM AND RACISM have all too often emerged in the study of the past. In the United States the credit for building the mounds of the Mississippi valley has been given to Welshmen and Israelites rather than acknowledge the heritage of the Indians. The ruins of Zimbabwe were a symbol first of white supremacy and now of black legitimacy. In Greece the past has functioned as a millstone, a romantic and unattainable myth. The Colonels touted the Glory of the Hellenes; and even now, like Niobe grieving for the loss of her children, Miss Mercouri pursues her Parthenon marbles—the symbols of a democracy that never existed. In Israel archaeology has provided perhaps the most potent national cement;[3] it has become a focus of attack, ironically by Jewish opponents of the state.

Karel Sklenář avoids post-War developments in Central European archaeology: "This is the present, whose history will be written by others, after us." We are fortunate, however, to have recent surveys in English of the Russian scene. Leo S. Klejn of the University of Leningrad produced his admirable "A Panorama of Theoretical Archaeology" in 1977, and more recently has followed this, in co-authorship with V. A. Bulkin and G. S. Lebedev, with "Attainments and Problems of Soviet Archaeology".[4] Soviet archaeology has certainly had its doctrinaire periods—notably under the influence of Academician N. Y. Marr, the architect of Japhetic theory, which was in part a reaction to Germany's Indo-Aryan doctrines. Klejn and his colleagues diplomatically state that "The approach then being taken with respect to ethnic history required a negative attitude towards hypotheses of cultural diffusion, migration and conquest as explanations of historical change, since they were assumed to have unfortunate political implications." All explanation was in terms of revolutions brought on by economic changes. The population remained stable: hence, in the Crimea, Japhetic-speaking Cimmerians became Iranian-speaking Scythians, who in turn became German-speaking Goths and finally Slavs.

This became the official Stalinist doctrine and has been indelibly tarred with the worst excesses of that period. It would be naive, however, to discount Soviet and Marxist archaeology as stagnant 19th-century dogma or a mere puppet of the state. Klejn's work shows a breadth of approach and a knowledge of the archaeological literature probably unequalled in Western Europe and among practitioners in the persistently insular North American tradition of archaeology. He and his co-authors emphasise seven trends in Soviet archaeology: historical; ethnic; sociological; formal description of artefacts; technological analysis; ecological; and theoretical. These parallel many of the progressive trends in Western archaeology. The overwhelming impression, though Klejn might not agree, is of a broad church (to use a favourite phrase of British Labour Party politicians). In fact, Klejn's credo states:

> "I consider prehistory and history as science, integrating the data of archaeology, ethnography, the study of written sources. . . . Similarly, I consider sociology, culturology and social and cultural anthropology as synthesising disciplines in a manner different from that of history, namely by exposing and formulating laws."

AS THE CANADIAN BRUCE TRIGGER has pointed out,[5] this is a view which would find much support among West European archaeologists—including, one might have thought, Grahame Clark, the recently retired Disney Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge and ex-Master of Peterhouse. After V. Gordon Childe, Clark was the great synthesiser of the post-War period. But while Childe adopted a personalised Marxist approach, and was an admirer of much in Russian archaeology, Clark was his chief ideological opponent. It was Clark who responded to Childe's idealised account of coordinated archaeological research in the USSR in 1934. In his article "Russian Archaeology: The Other Side of the Picture" (*Proceedings of The Prehistoric Society*, No. 2, 1936) Clark emphasised that "Archaeology in Russia has, in fact, become a department of Bolshevik propaganda . . . savants who have declined to submit to the dictation of the propaganda chiefs have been ruthlessly removed." If Childe were still alive to read Grahame Clark's new book *The Identity of Man,*[6] he might feel justified in repeating a concern he expressed in 1940, "lest dislike of the Soviets' foreign or domestic policy should lead men of science to take an unduly gloomy view of the position of archaeology in Russia."[7] However Childe himself had moved away from his early willingness to discuss "Occidentalism" (the idea that there was independent autonomous or autochthonous development of European prehistoric societies), in part

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[3] See Ofer Bar-Yosel and Amihai Mazar, "Israeli Archaeology", *World Archaeology*, 13.3 (1982), pp. 310–25.

[4] Leo S. Klejn, "A Panorama of Theoretical Archaeology", *Current Anthropology* 18.1 (1977), pp. 1–42. V. A. Bulkin, Leo S. Klejn, and G. S. Lebedev, "Attainments and Problems of Soviet Archaeology", *World Archaeology* 13.3 (1982), pp. 272–95.

[5] Bruce Trigger, "No Longer from another Planet", *Antiquity* 52 (1978), pp. 193–98.

[6] *The Identity of Man.* By GRAHAME CLARK. Methuen, £12.50.

[7] Quoted by Barbara McNairn in her *Method and Theory of V. Gordon Childe* (Edinburgh University Press, 1980), p. 163.

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because this was a mainstay of German dogma. Instead, in Childe's *The Dawn of European Civilization* (1925) the light rose in the east.

Professor Clark's ideological antagonism is to Marxist and Russian archaeology, where research is "planned, directed and executed" by the state. Quite rightly, he points out that the Soviet wheel had come full circle by 1950, when Stalin repudiated Marr's theories as vulgar sociology. The patriotism promoted by World War II stimulated "ethnogenetics" (the prehistory of national groups), and diffusionism came into fashion. Professor Clark has attempted a brave synthesis, perhaps best viewed as a response to Childe, albeit 26 years after his suicide in Australia. He is also reacting to what he sees as the dehumanising effects of sociology and recent trends in archaeology—some of which, ironically, he launched himself. His title *The Identity of Man* is not carelessly chosen. Inevitably he has entered the dangerous waters where academics (usually ethologists or zoologists) cannot resist trawling for large conclusions from their own specialisation. Clark abhors what he calls "homogenisation and dehumanisation"—who does not? Like Klejn he emphasises the distinction between the generalising, law-making aims of natural science, and the arts which "are concerned more with persons and personal reactions than with things as such, with quality rather than quantity and with diversity and individuality rather than with homogeneous abstract categories." His defence of archaeology as an historical subject is welcome. In many ways it parallels Isaiah Berlin's distinction between model-generating sciences whose subject-matter is "thin" isolated strands of experience, and those such as history whose texture is composed of "thick" interwoven strands.[8]

Unfortunately—in my opinion, at least—some of Clark's conclusions sound like an apologia for Reaganomics mixed with Peterhouse Blues: ". . . the finest embodiments of the human spirit were the products of societies in which spending power was concentrated in the fewest hands . . . citizens of modern egalitarian societies" are now "reduced to staring in museums and show houses at relics of the great civilisations in which their forebears however vicariously once shared." Professor Clark includes among "the finest embodiments of the human spirit" the gardens of Versailles—which could alternatively be seen as nature constrained into an artificial expression of aristocratic megalomania. Clark's view of the modern world is jaundiced, and surprisingly '60s and early '70s orientated: still populated with long-haired dropouts, revolting students, and automatic prosperity. At the same time it is Orwellian: bland and drab with no peaks of achievement, stultified by egalitarianism and industrialisation. If Professor Clark believes the world outside the walls of Peterhouse is a vast council estate he would be pleased to see the latest number of *The World of Interiors*. He need not fear: the differences still live.

[8] Isaiah Berlin, "The Concept of Scientific History", in *Concept and Categories: Philosophical Essays* (Oxford University Press, 1980).

SYNTHESIS MAY GENERATE CONTENTION but it is a valuable tradition in British archaeology. A recent example of this type of work, Stuart Piggott's *The Earliest Wheeled Transport*, is a wide-ranging and attractively produced techno-

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historical synthesis[9] of which Gordon Childe, Piggott's predecessor in the Abercromby Chair of Archaeology, would be proud. Such cultural and historical syntheses have been sadly lacking in the United States, where archaeology still propagated the German empirical tradition of Franz Boas long after mainstream anthropology had shifted towards generalisation and theory-building. The US reaction against empiricism came most spectacularly in the 1960s with what, in those neophiliac times, was inevitably called the New Archaeology. New Archaeology was never afraid to hype itself, and neither was its most vociferous proponent, Lewis Binford—"perhaps the greatest archaeological thinker of our time" according to the blurb on his *In Pursuit of the Past,*[10] restated without qualification by Professor Colin Renfrew in his Foreword.

Binford, like the New Archaeology, has always been capable of stimulating extremes of admiration and disapproval. Opponents viewed the movement as a kind of religious cult and Binford as its high priest. One often-expressed criticism was of the language, much of it the kind of sociological gobbledygook which convinces admirers of plain speaking that someone is pouring concrete into every available orifice of communication. It should come as a relief to those of little faith, particularly on this side of the Atlantic, that *In Pursuit of the Past* is Binford's clearest, most moderate and approachable work. Perhaps a little of the British tradition has rubbed off, following Binford's stay in Britain in 1980, but certainly some of the credit must go to John Cherry and Robin Torrence, who were responsible for "editorial collaboration." This seems to mean that they took on the role of evangelists; taping Professor Binford's lectures, knocking them into shape, and providing him with drafts.

In Pursuit of the Past began life as a collection of lectures and some of the seams inevitably show. On the other hand, it has a vividness and immediacy that is appealing. One of the shortcomings of New Archaeology in the US has been the retreat from "mere" data, reflected in the low status of salvage or "dirt" archaeology and the failure to publish excavation reports.[11]

Binford shows clearly how his ideas have sprung from the data. He vividly describes his frustration in trying to make sense of sequences of flintwork from French Palaeolithic sites: what he calls the Mousterian Problem. The book is a bridge-building exercise between technicians and theorists, and Binford's message is simple: archaeological data do not speak for themselves. The archaeological record exists in the present and must be decoded if it is to tell us anything about the past; static evidence must be translated into explanations of dynamic processes.

Archaeologists have not developed reliable and tenable means of doing this, and Binford's principal response to the problem has been to involve himself in archaeo-ethnography, notably with his studies of Nunamiut Eskimos. These sections of the book certainly make a good read. Hunter-gatherer communities are shown to operate over a huge range. Their dauntingly complex landscape is populated with seasonal camps, kill sites, butchery sites, hunting stands, deadfall traps, caches, and even "lovers' camps", where unmarried couples are allowed to cohabit in out of the way places, in return for going hunting at the hungriest and most unpromising time of year.

Cynics might argue that Binford is dependent on vulnerable evidence which cannot realistically be expected to survive the formation processes of archaeology; nevertheless his work is valuable in broadening the scope of archaeological interpretation. Binford's approach is highly functionalist. This is a dirty word in some anthropological circles, but it would be overly dogmatic to deny the relevance of functionalist studies. Problems relating to the ergonomics of the human body, the basic need for food, heat and light, and methods of animal butchery are constants (or "eternal objects" as Binford terms them, using Whitehead's phrase), and these are aspects which can be studied and extrapolated from. Nevertheless, as Binford's more technical writings show, interpretation of the archaeological data is usually dependent on statistical manipulation and is rarely indisputable.

Binford identifies what he calls the Big Questions—a kind of John Wayne approach to the past. How old is human behaviour? When, where, and why did man adopt agriculture? Why did agricultural societies become increasingly complex? No one can deny the importance of these questions, some of which have recently been tackled from a European perspective in *Hunter-Gatherer Economy in Prehistory* and *Early European Agriculture.*[12]

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[9] *The Earliest Wheeled Transport: From the Atlantic Coast to the Caspian Sea.* By STUART PIGGOTT. Thames and Hudson, £20.

[10] *In Pursuit of the Past: Decoding the Archaeological Record.* By LEWIS R. BINFORD. Thames and Hudson, £12.50.

[11] See Colin Renfrew, "Divided We Stand: Aspects of Archaeology and Information", *American Antiquity* 48.1 (January 1983).

[12] *Hunter-Gatherer Economy in Prehistory: A European Perspective.* Edited by G. BAILEY. Cambridge University Press, £25. *Early European Agriculture: Its Foundation and Development.* Edited by M. R. JARMAN, G. N. BAILEY, and H. N. JARMAN. Cambridge University Press, £25.

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The danger is that the Big Questions become the only questions—the homogenising process which Professor Clark fears. "Yet our Big Questions cannot be solved by working on a small scale in our own country or province: they require research spanning huge time periods in broad geographical areas." This sounds ominously like another nail in the coffin of detailed regional studies.

British and European archaeology has grown out of a tradition of historical studies which has not been afraid to be "particularist." Palaeolithic studies have not loomed large in much of Northern and Central Europe—archaeology on this side of the Atlantic is not automatically equated with prehistory. The American antipathy to historical studies, expressed by H. L. Mencken ("*Historian*: an unsuccessful novelist"), is a persistent trait in anthropological writing, where "History" has often been categorised as trivial. There is now something of a backlash against the more extreme claims of New Archaeology. Binford himself stresses that the term was not coined by its advocates but by its opponents. He also questions whether any revolution or paradigm shift (in the Kuhnian sense) took place in archaeology in the 1960s. Advocates of the purist, deductive approach, or "Law and Order" brigade, are given short shrift.

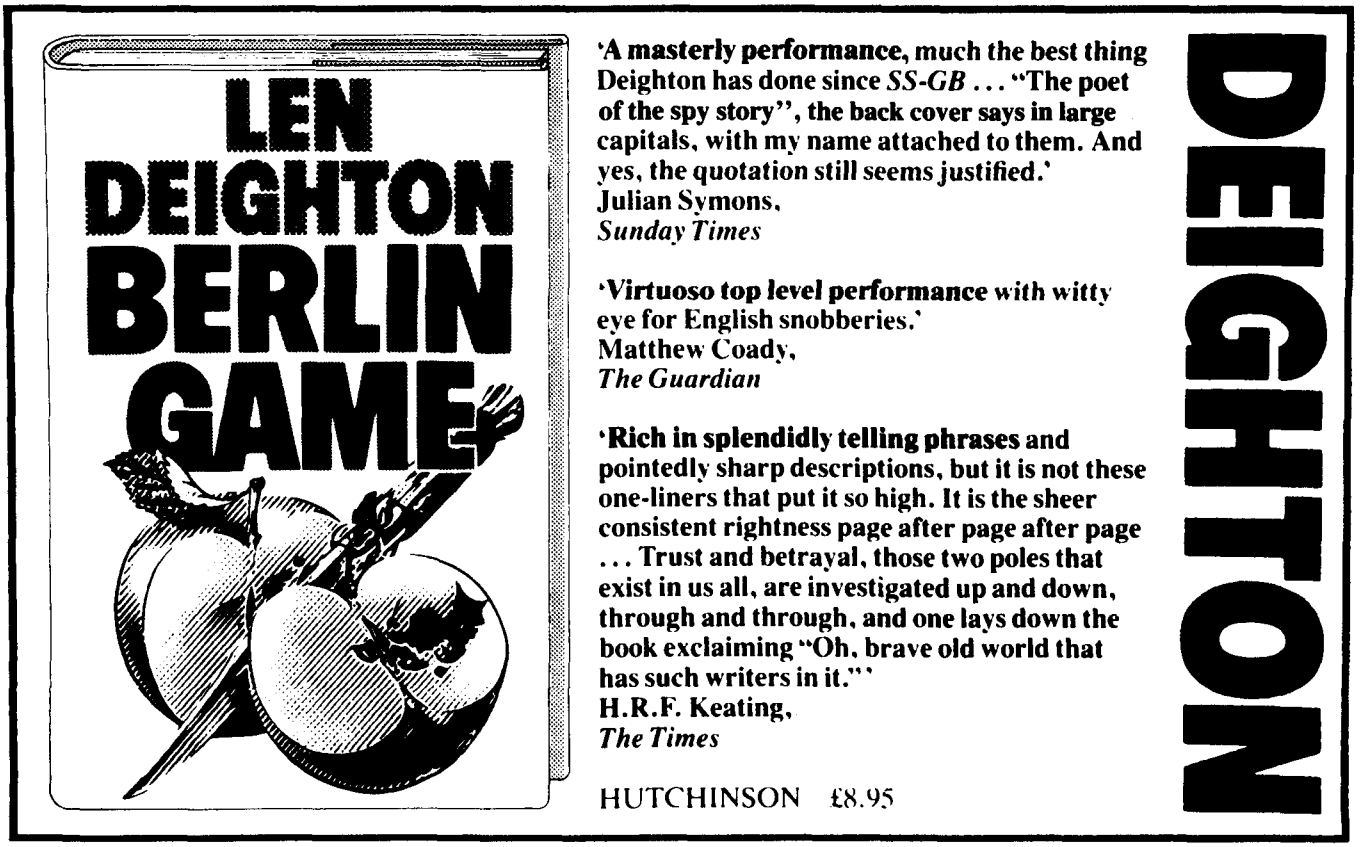
The way might seem open for the humanist European tradition to penetrate American thinking. A party of Britons crossed the Atlantic in 1980 to participate in that great potlatch, the 45th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Philadelphia. The result is a wide-ranging and stimulating collection of concise papers, *Ranking, Resource and Exchange.*[13] New archaeologists—or, as they are now more appropriately termed twenty years on, processualists—have a masochistic habit of inviting Big Men to sum up and do a demolition job on them, and here the American archaeologist Robert Whallon obliges, with yet another appeal for deductive archaeology. The inductive vs. deductive debate continues to generate heat and paper,[14] and in this collection the ubiquitous Lewis Binford, more belligerent on his own territory, castigates the Brits for being overly historical: "We need to abandon the idealist view, we need to stop trying to reconstruct the past largely by using methods of empathetic understanding."

The Cambridge structural archaeologists come in for particular savaging—not surprisingly, as they represent an anti-functionalist heresy. Their case has recently been set out in *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology*, another volume from Cambridge University Press.[15] The structural archaeologists—they are at pains not to call themselves structuralists—are attempting to examine artefacts within the framework of ideas and culture. In a sense they are searching for their own European intellectual roots. Field archaeologists will await results to judge whether this is exotic sociology or a branch of archaeology which can be practised. At the professional level the aims of most archaeologists remain more modest and essentially pragmatic, as *Research Objectives in British*

[13] *Ranking, Resource and Exchange: Aspects of the Archaeology of Early European Society*. Edited by COLIN RENFREW and STEPHEN SHENNAN. Cambridge University Press, £18.50.

[14] For the continuing debate, see D. B. Bamforth and A. C. Spaulding, "Human Behaviour, Explanation Archaeology, History and Science", *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 1 (1982), pp. 179–93, and David Stove, *Popper and After: Four Modern Irrationalists* (Pergamon Press, 1982).

[15] *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology*. Edited by IAN HODDER. Cambridge University Press, £19.50.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Archaeology[16] illustrates. But the archaeological record continues to accumulate at an alarming rate—see, for example, the results of aerial photography which are producing landscapes of comparable complexity to Binford's ethnographically derived ones. (*Roman Britain from the Air*, by S. S. Frere and J. K. S. St Joseph,[17] is a finely produced book illustrating a wide range of well researched sites, which are unfortunately treated as discrete units. The methodological problems of aerial photography and landscape archaeology are dealt with more thoroughly in G. S. Maxwell's *The Impact of Aerial Reconnaissance on Archaeology*.[18]) At the same time, destruction of the remains of the past is a world-wide problem, and Steven Le Blanc, in *The Mimbres People*,[19] documents a particularly dramatic example in the south-west United States, giving us a rare and welcome American synthesis by a veteran of New Archaeology's deductive wing. All in all, though, the response continues to be piecemeal at the theoretical, methodological, and institutional level.

There is a Russian fable which, if I remember it accurately, tells of the fish, the crab, and the bird who were yoked together to pull a cart. The fish dived towards the water, the crab went sideways, and the bird flew upwards. Archaeologists sometimes seem to be like that. They are nevertheless all yoked together by that foreign country which they all share—the complex and interwoven past.

[16] *Research Objectives in British Archaeology*. Edited by Charles Thomas. Council for British Archaeology, £1.50.

[17] *Roman Britain from the Air*. By S. S. Frere and J. K. S. St Joseph. Cambridge University Press, £15.

[18] *The Impact of Aerial Reconnaissance on Archaeology*. By G. S. Maxwell. Council for British Archaeology, £18.

[19] *The Mimbres People*. By Steven Le Blanc. Thames and Hudson, £18.

Expanding Elements

Recent Poetry—By John Mole

"(No ideas/but in things)" wrote William Carlos Williams, in parenthesis, and how that statement has kept returning to justify the minimal. The numinous object as an end in itself—palpable, crafted, the repository of an immaculate vocabulary—so often seems to be the Holy Grail of contemporary poets; an ambition to achieve much in little which remains resolutely little because the talent doesn't amount to much beyond a display of those qualities beloved of reviewers, "a sharp eye and a feeling for language." Words alone, alas, are not certain good. Obvious as it may seem to say so, there has to be a mind to arrange them. Poets must be possessed of the expanding element through which poems can grow larger than their occasion, otherwise it's like buying a dud Japanese flower and watching in vain for something to happen when you drop it in the tumbler. There are plenty of these duds to go round. Most packets contain several, some fewer than others, and on the rare occasion every pellet blossoms. In another of his wise little poems about poetry, Williams writes:

Good Christ what is
a poet if any
exists?

a man
whose words will
bite
their way
home—being actual

having the form
of motion.

What's more, there must be a home for the words to bite *from* as well as *to*. Intelligence is the form of their motion, without which the actuality remains an inert precision, and poetry merely a game played with vivid counters.

Elizabeth Bishop seems to me a supreme example of bite and motion. The excellence of her work[1] lies in the degree to which it is more than a total of the visual accuracies and startling metaphors for which it is celebrated. Not surprisingly it became the touchstone of perfection for a whole generation of highly intelligent, troubled American poets who envied her poise while recognising how very far from effortless it was. They were all ambitious and accomplished, but if their minds had mountains then somehow the air—and certainly the light—seemed clearer where she was. Randall Jarrell even went as far as to say that her poems were, quite simply, what poems ought to be, and I suspect that this may well have been because so many of his own, while seeking for a shape, kept becoming top-heavy with raw, plangent emotion. They seldom came out quite right, except the monologues. And one can see precisely why Robert Lowell, also, admired her; in one of her last poems, addressed to him *in memoriam*, she writes, "You can't derange, or rearrange, your poems again." There's understanding in that, all right. She recognised the need to balance passion and perception, intelligence and grace. That was her ambition and, more consistently than for Jarrell or Lowell, her achievement. When Lowell himself wrote, in his "Epilogue", "Pray for the grace of accuracy/ Vermeer gave to the sun's illumination/stealing like the tide across a map", he was voicing a prayer that had been answered for Elizabeth Bishop. And, incidentally, not only was the first poem in her first major collection entitled "The Map" but Jarrell as amongst the first critics to liken her work to Vermeer's. Such telling coincidences reverberate, as do such marvellous lines as these:

This iceberg cuts its facets from within.
Like jewelry from a grave

[1] *The Complete Poems 1927–1979*. By Elizabeth Bishop. Chatto & Windus, £10.95.

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it saves itself perpetually and adorns
only itself, perhaps the snows
which so surprise us lying on the sea.
Goodbye, we say, goodbye, the ship steers off
where waves give in to one another's waves
and clouds run in a warmer sky.
Icebergs behoove the soul
(both being self-made from elements least visible)
to see them so: fleshed, fair, erected indivisible.

In another of her late poems, "Santarém", collected for the first time in this *Complete Poems*, Elizabeth Bishop writes of a remembered landscape: "I liked the place; I liked the idea of the place." Her particular, enticing and profound talent can hardly be better characterised. Two apparently distinct observations are set up in juxtaposition within a single statement, the semi-colon telling the eye that perception and thought reflect each other in endless, incomplete ramification even as the ear registers a full-stop and is lulled into the false security of hearing a pair of straightforward remarks made with pleasing symmetry and assured, conversational ease. The delightful title, too, of a very early sequence, "Three Sonnets for the Eyes", indicates a similar tension between descriptive detail and the sustaining shape of the poem. For Elizabeth Bishop, a poet of remarkable *claritas*, nothing is merely incidental although every incident is welcomed as an amazing novelty. She is the most knowing and experienced of *ingénues*, at the same time deeply humane and dashingly witty, and it's her poetic method to be so. There's restraint in her brilliance, not least when she's most tempted to excess. She knows that "just one luscious adjective/infuriates the whole damned band/and they're squabbling for it." Hers is a most cunning diplomacy of the imagination.

In "The Weed", one of her emblematic dream-fantasies, presented with an oddly haunting matter-of-factness which makes it so immediately a part of the reader's experience, there's a typical moment of ambush:

Suddenly there was a motion,
as startling, there, to every sense
as an explosion. Then it dropped
to insistent, cautious creeping
in the region of the heart. . . .

This seems to catch exactly the sensation of delight and disquiet felt when reading Elizabeth Bishop's poems. Whether her subject is a personality, an animal, an exotic landscape or a humdrum domestic interior, she first surprises—juggling our perceptions—and then, before we have realised it, she leaves us moved. At one level her poems are a "theatre of the spirits:/objects putting the laws/of identity through hoops", but what this ingenuity serves is her keen, underlying awareness of how, in the end, we are all jumbled in a common box from cradle to grave:

The passengers lie back.
Snores. Some long sighs.
A dreamy divagation
begins in the night,
a gentle, auditory,
slow hallucination . . .

In the creaking and noises,
an old conversation
—not concerning us,
but recognisable, somewhere,
back in the bus:

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Grandparents' voices

uninterruptedly
talking, in Eternity:
names being mentioned,
things cleared up finally. . . .

Like those lines, the poems weave their way mysteriously in and out of the interstices between here and elsewhere, always "driving to the interior", aware that "our knowledge is historical, flowing and flown", and they certainly leave me grateful for a clear-sightedness which is both the purest poetry and the most candid, gentle and stoical celebration of the human condition.

CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON is a very different writer from Elizabeth Bishop, but equally one for whom poetic thought is a matter of arranging objects. Many of the poems in a new selection of his work, dating back to 1949,[2] are *about* the process, reading like experimental demonstrations full of ellipses, impacted phrasing and the kind of compression which comes of taking notes while the bunsen is burning. They're far from being mere activities of the laboratory, though, and their material is certainly the stuff of human experience. Nevertheless there is a passionate, visceral symmetry about them which seldom lets one forget that they are intent upon results, and that these results are to do with definitions of poetry—its possibilities and limits.

In a short prose piece, Middleton observes that "the Historian, after all, should move at a leisurely pace among the objects of his investigation, as a dog might, in a forest of lamp-posts, a lucid dog, that is, one who knows the pleasure of dragging pleasure out." I take it that, for him, the historian and the poet are distinct, the one dragging it out, the other packing it in. Intensity, "the very nerve that sees" as he puts it, lights up the lamp-posts for the poet, but it's a controlled and often rather *voulu* intensity: "The poem/Attacked by fleets of random objects/Had no purity or perspective whatever." Middleton allows little random behaviour amongst his objects. Purity and perspective, his imperatives, require firm discipline and a hermetic tightness. When he exclaims, in "Ibeji", "Lord/What loops one lives in", it is possible to see each loop as both a continuum and a noose, just as to read through *111 Poems* is to experience stretches of clear, direct and moving poetry which suddenly clams up in bursts of obscurity and scrambled intellectuality. This is fascinating if, in the end, unsatisfactory, and it seems appropriate that Middleton's favourite shape (to judge from its recurrence throughout the book) is the oval, that tension between square and circle which is never really happy being either.

For all his exact, artful spacings, placings and conspicuous punctuation which, I suppose, have earned him his reputation (regretted in the publisher's blurb) as a poet of remarkable oddity, Middleton can write fine poems, several of which, here, come in the selection from his 1969 collection *Our Flowers and Nice Bones*. "The Armadillos" is a beautiful piece, and an example of his vivid irony at its best. I think Elizabeth Bishop, whose own "The Armadillo" is one of her most memorable poems, would have appreciated it. Three stanzas must suffice to give something of its special quality:

Don't fall, Harriet! Arthur, don't fall!
We can't help it if the armadillos
drop like bombs and catch only
in the lower branches with their claws.
Falling like that, they can't be lonely.

Winters, they leave the trees and trundle
to the end of the valley. In twos and fours
they cluster there and comfort each other.
The frost feels them under their bucklers;
they taste it happening in their jaws.

But in the trees where they build hides
of cardboard boxes and paper bags,
their main concern is believing summer.
For my friends broken by special committees
I hang out armadillo flags.

IF CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON sometimes seems too esoteric an arranger of coordinates and polarities, D. M. Thomas[3] is nothing if not programmed and prescriptive. For all his apparent experimentation, he pre-empts the reader's imagination, barging in on it variously dressed (or undressed) as lover, bard and analyst. He never gives short measure. By turns torrentially libidinous and soberly in command of his historical, family or futuristic fables, he is quite clear about the direction a poetic career should take:

The first book of a poet should be called Stone
or Evening, *expressing in a single word*
The modesty of being part of the earth,
The goodness of evening and stone, beyond the poet.

The second book should have a name blushing
With a great generality, such as My Sister Life,
Shocking in its pride, even more in its modesty:
Exasperated, warm, teasing, observant, tender.

Later books should withdraw into a mysterious
Privacy such as we all make for ourselves:
The White Stag *or* Plantain. *Or include the name*
Of the place at which his book falls open.

But this very clarity sounds the note of self-aware portentousness which mars too many of his poems, giving them an air of solemn, claustrophobic urgency. "Exasperated, warm, teasing, observant, tender" they can certainly be, but at the same time they are too busy announcing that they are. In his Preface to the *Selected Poems*, Thomas writes: " 'Sex and the dead', said Yeats, were the only two subjects worthy of a serious man's conversation, and I'd go along with that. Sex, of course, includes all creativity, and death includes its own vanquishing." I'd go along with that, too, including the *of course*, and I quite take the implied point that I am not a serious man if I don't take Thomas seriously. I do. I'm entirely solemn-faced when, for example, this instance of death and sex seizes him:

A glint
of family madness in her eyes, my love talks about
dying. "Fuck death!" I spit,
and slide my hand along the pew, under her skirt.
Invasive as a celtic saint,
my finger opens her like the spine of a new testament.

[2] *111 Poems*. By CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON. Carcanet, £5.95.
[3] *Selected Poems*. By D. M. THOMAS. Secker & Warburg, £6.95.

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The trouble is that on this occasion, as on so many, Thomas's fantastic earnestness makes me embarrassed to laugh, although he convinces me that laughter must surely be an important part of the truth. What, alas, is missing is a sense of humour and absurdity—a *perspective* on the experience which, far from trivialising his themes, might enrich them and make them seem less monolithic. As it is, the topics of conversation are Sex and Death—and *how*! They flaunt "the modesty of being part of the earth" with a rather immodest insistence, and when Thomas withdraws into that "mysterious/privacy such as we all make for ourselves" they go with him, bag and baggage—to Vienna, Russia, everywhere.

The best poems in the book are directly elegiac and, refreshingly, eschew fantasy. On a smaller and larger/private and public scale, respectively, "Rubble"—a portrait of Thomas's dying mother—and "Requiem for Aberfan" are very moving indeed, showing—despite all reservations—what a good poet Thomas can be. Nevertheless, even when he is writing out of an immediate sense of shock, the cumulative insistence on significance can wreck the poem, as in "Sun Valley" where an account of the mass killing of poultry is presented as a Dantesque vision. The experience of reading this is unnerving in the wrong sense. To begin with, a poem of keen personal observation is strengthened by the allusion to Dante implicit in the *terza rima* form and in the subtle inversions of syntax which lend a slight but not obtrusive air of antique courtliness to the poem's development. This highlights the horror, but then, at the end, a direct reference to the *Inferno* suddenly makes the whole poem take on the retrospective air of having been a literary occasion. It becomes another example of original perception worked up and over into so much less than it could have been by a self-conscious artistry.

THE TITLE POEM of George Barker's *Anno Domini*[4] is very nearly the complete volume, and a work of quite remarkable bravura. Its vivid, self-generating rhetoric goes over the top and stays there, and the reader—engrossed—stays with it on a rare circuit of celebration, despair, satire and incantation. In the name of all that is alive and uncertain, Barker castigates the fixed, the arid and the complacent: "at a time of categorical imperatives/to guess about clouds:/at a time of politicians/to trust only to children and demi-gods"—and so on, through instance after instance, and sequence after sequence of parallelism. "Anno Domini" is psalmic, bizarre, profound, banal, a canticle of wisdom and bathos in equal, invigorating measure. If you stop to think—which the poem, at least for its duration, ensures that you don't—it would be sentimental lunacy to trust only to children and demi-gods, but the whole enterprise reads like the work of a childlike demi-god blessed with more than a little mature insight and sophisticated humour. Even as, for example, God is addressed as a Frankensteinian professor whose monstrous creation "could have come from nowhere save a mind/capable of inventing the idea of evil" one responds to a driving passion which transcends the rather absurd machinery and the cluttered rant of the vocabulary. There is a deep and terrified level at which a passage like this calls out for assent:

[4] *Anno Domini*. By GEORGE BARKER. Faber and Faber, £4.00.

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1. Curled up in front of the television, turn straight to Ian McEwan's Diary column.

2. After the noise of a day in the classroom, let your eyes flick from the television to what's really happening. Take in a frightening article about the police using guns.

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What does this shambling machine whisper
as it crawls and stumbles among rocks and ruins,
its clockwork eyes clouded with selfhate, its
terminals cancerous, wetware and wordwrite
alphanumeric, phonemed,
automatic forks pick-
ing up isotopes, robotics utterly grouched,
the reproductive generator hanging
down like an obsolete decoration, the
anthropic spirit skinnered, the
enigma cybernized,
the circuit of the nervous system worn
to a nexus of Freudian wires,
what does this shambling machine whisper
when it encounters, down the dark path,
halfway through a Black Forest, of
a midwinter midnight,
the huge god riding on a dead white horse?
What, what does it whisper?
"I am a man"?

The other poems in *Anno Domini* are an elegy for several of Barker's contemporaries, including Louis MacNeice who "knew that poetry begins/where the philosophical propositions stop" but confronted that knowledge in very different ways from Barker, and an apocalyptic ballad, "The Ship of Fools", where the élite passengers swill, guzzle and screw while:

The priest stood priestifying at
his little wooden ark.
"Beloved" he said, "God is not dead.
He's whistling in the dark."

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Barker, pagan and priestifyer, continues to get the best of both worlds.

THE HISTORICAL OCCASION of Geoffrey Hill's new poem[5] is the life, death and apotheosis of Charles Péguy. Péguy was a national socialist, poet, bookseller, a "radical soul" whose "dream of France, militant pastoral" was implicated in the murder (July 1914) of Jean Jaurès, the socialist leader. He had admired Jaurès up to the point where he came out against France's entry into the First World War, but subsequently rounded on him, calling for his blood and receiving his answer from an assassin's bullet. Péguy, a complex patriot, was fired by a vision of the "national revolution", of a leaping into cleanness, which transcended conventional socialist allegiances. His conception of patriotism was "regenerative and sacrificial" and, of its essence, inflammatory: to adapt Yeats's not entirely dissimilar question, asked in another country a few years later, did certain words of his send out the man who shot the leader? As Hill puts it in a prose postscript to *The Mystery of the Charity of Charles Péguy*, Péguy was at the same time moved by violent emotions and violently afflicted by mischance. The violence and the mischance coincided in his death on the first day of the first battle of the Marne in September 1914.

So much for the notes of the poem's theme; but, as with most of Geoffrey Hill's work, its impact is the total of its variations. These are many. They are densely layered and impacted. The historical occasion is only a part of the poetic event. *The Mystery of the Charity of Charles Péguy* is in ten sections, and is as intricate and allusive a pavan of violence and ambiguous redemption as Hill has yet written, an accumulation of beautiful and demanding lines, each in itself a facet for contemplation. It is also, though, remote in its sonority and its making of *ex cathedra* statements, as if it were being delivered to a particularly erudite congregation from the other end of the cathedral. When Hill meditates on suffering and action, doubt and faith, reputation and redemption, he often comes dangerously close to sounding like a parody of Eliot's priests addressing the Women of Canterbury:

Drawn on the past
these presences endure; they have not ceased
to act, suffer, crouching into the hail
like labourers of their own memorial. . . .

He's a brilliant phrase-maker, though, and each phrase is witness to a complex passion—an intense marriage of doubt and faith—which seems a match for Péguy's. The simplest combination of words, for Hill, is a feast of associations: "The guilt belongs to time", "Death does you proud" etc. Like the blood that, emblematically, dribbles from Péguy's skull on the battlefield it is "a simple lesion of the complex brain." In fact, the whole poem could be viewed as a succession of moments at which Hill's theme and method coincide in a celebration of his art and of Péguy's example. It is as self-conscious as it is selflessly admiring, and some of the stanzas are extraordinarily beautiful in their finish:

Landscape is like revelation; it is both
singular crystal and the remotest things.

[5] *The Mystery of the Charity of Charles Péguy*. By GEOFFREY HILL. Agenda Editions/André Deutsch, £3.00.

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Cloud-shadows of seasons revisit the earth,
odourless myrrh borne by the wandering kings.

Happy are they who, under the gaze of God,
die for the "terre charnelle", marry her blood
to theirs, and, in strange Christian hope, go down
into the darkness of resurrection. . . .

Above all it is that "strange Christian hope" which reverberates throughout the poem, from the opening lines where Jaurès dies in the "wine puddle" of his own blood to the final stanza where Péguy offers up his "body's prayer." The power is that of a poem which hopes where it cannot prove, and which very elegantly founders, as did Hill's "Lachrimae" sequence, "in desire for things unfound." As he writes of Péguy in the post-script, "he had . . . rediscovered the solitary ardours of faith but not the consolations of religious practice. He remained self-excommunicate but adoring." Who, really, is this describing? *Solitary ardours, self-excommunicate, adoring*? The more one reads this poem, the more one feels that it may well be the closest Hill has come to giving us an oblique autobiography of the spirit. And grandiose as that may sound, it is appropriate to the whole tone of the poem.

ANDREW MOTION'S *Secret Narratives*[6] is a book of fluent, pleasantly readable if rather gratuitously baffling poems. They have a quiet levelness of tone despite the multiplicity of voices at play within their modest confines. Full of ambiguous, fugitive pronouns which hide inside each other, seeming by turns to evade their author and to establish a complicity with him, they keep raising the question of who exactly is writing whom or what. The idea behind many of them seems to be that snatches of conversation and anecdote, held in place by a loose narrative structure, should resonate and expand into something resembling a completeness of story. Motion is good at establishing mood if you stop worrying about what it all adds up to. In fact, what it all adds up to does appear to be mood. He's an old-fashioned impressionist *à la mode*, experimenting with the latest techniques of fiction, and he achieves some poignant atmospheres of loneliness, desolation and betrayal. The best poems in *Secret Narratives* speak with a single voice, as in "The House Through"—a poem of sweetness and delicacy with a *frisson* of the supernatural. It's reminiscent of A. E. Coppard's wonderful short story "Adam and Eve and Pinch Me", and points up the essential Englishness of Motion's work:

Here at the door I am
identical with its thin paint.
Then one step and darkness
falls in a furious storm

of grains, splinters, rings
until daylight appears again,
and the hall, and his voice
outside in the garden singing.

Motion also has a touching sympathy with the Englishman in exile. His portrait, in "From the Imperial", of Edward Lear "lonely/and bigongulous, wishing/he were an egg" is appropri-

[6] *Secret Narratives*. By ANDREW MOTION. The Salamander Press, £6.00, paper £3.00.

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ately eccentric without being in the least sentimental. He could trust to his sense of oddity much more than he does. Often he seems far too intent on making safe, acceptable poems.

THERE'S NOTHING SAFE about Peter Reading's work. He slaps on the detail with relish—great splashes of angry, viscous colour—and his poems are often as hilarious as they are painful. At one point, in his new book,[7] he quotes Graham Greene's remark "There is a splinter of ice in the heart of a writer" and adds, "I savour/the respective merits of one/ kind of mayhem over another." He is obviously attracted to the desperate and awful but there's nothing gratuitous about the way he dramatises the droll horrors. I'd complement that observation of Greene's with another of Aldous Huxley's—from *Ape and Essence*—that "tragedy is the farce that involves our sympathies; farce, the tragedy that happens to outsiders." The more one laughs at Reading's brilliant scenarios, the more one recognises the real private and social horrors they represent, and in several cases one is pushed beyond laughter to sheer amazement and despair. "At Home", an account of a brutal attack on an old lady, is an extraordinary poem: its last section is spoken, in persona, by one of the teenage thugs who invade her house, and his gross, semi-articulate itemising of the gang's various acts of cruelty is chillingly done:

It was
dead great, how she screamed and screamed and
how her hair come out in handfuls.
Gibbo gets this bleeding budgie
what she had in this big cage thing
and he got its wings and lit them
with his old fag-lighter. It was
dead great how this parrot-thing went
up in smoke. Gib bit its beak off.
That was dead great, how he done it.
Then we found her purse and all it
had was bleedin one pound fifty
so we give her fingers the old
snap-snap like and Gibbo tells her
"If you don't say where you've got it
hid, I'll give ya boilin water."
An he did. That was dead great like.
There was dates—I don't like them much.

My only reservations concern the inevitable element of performance in this, as in much of Reading's work, and the sense given that things are often so desperate that merely to reveal them becomes the full extent of possibility. Perhaps they are, and perhaps it does. Certainly Reading has no time for humanitarian cant, and lines like "Accentuate the dignified resilience/ that humans, or some, are capable of still" are immediately undercut and deflated by irony. *Diplopic* is an entertaining, worrying book by a talented, idiosyncratic writer. If the double-vision is sometimes the *reader's*, after the battering administered, at least that reader is compelled to think about *why* he got hurt.

CAROL RUMENS' POETRY is becoming more distinctive, when she lets it, but she's yet to break away from the fashion parade. Nineteen pages of her second collec-

[7] *Diplopic*. By PETER READING. Secker & Warburg, £5.50.

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tion, *Star Whisper*,[8] are taken up by a smart, metropolitan sequence of little poems entitled "Regent's Park Crossings." This is dedicated to the "Onlie Begetter", who will presumably be readily enough identified by all those with a nice dress sense. It's a stylish performance all right, and a convenient display of current reflexes. There's high-class copywriting—"et in Arcadia ice-cream"; shocking sensationalisms lurking amongst the clusters of similes—tulips at night "sleep like the guns/of good fascists"; and at least one act of direct homage in the line "the world is pure television." The whole whimsical enterprise may delight some readers, and certainly it will flatter those in the know, but I found it all rather synthetic. It might have made a pleasant enough pamphlet, but the book never really recovers from the fact that the sequence occupies over a quarter of the space. The intermission is over-long. Ad infinitum ice-cream.

This is a pity, and I'm dwelling on it only because several of the other poems in *Star Whisper* are very good indeed, showing independence and originality. Carol Rumens' real talent is for poems of some substance and length where she is able to develop her perceptions into a considerable weightiness of meditation or argument. "Heart Sufferer", "The Most Difficult Door", "The Emigrée", "An Easter Garland" and "Double Exposure" are particularly impressive, although she should beware of filling out lines with ready-mades like "the home's true heart" or "the whole of time." *Star Whisper* also contains a successful villanelle which is really *about* something, a rare achievement and further evidence of Carol Rumens' increasing confidence and skill:

Then on our hearts the whole world beat
And of our hopes the whole world said
But these are not what children eat.

Two shadows shiver on our street.
They have a roof, a fire, a bed,
A shelf of books, a little meat
—But these are not what children eat.

FINALLY, AN excellent first collection. John Levett's *Changing Sides*[9] opens with "The Insect House" which won him the 1982 *New Statesman* Prudence Farmer Award. Its minute attention to an intricate, curious collection of glass tanks full of clicks and flutterings amounts to an impressive vehicle for conveying those "introverted privacies of fear" which occasion the poem. There are several more complete successes, too, mostly in the vein of a wryly tender personal observation which Levett manages more effectively than satirical comment. I particularly liked "A Letter from my Aunts", which ends:

Exposed to guilt, I read it through once more,
Surprised again how innocent and shy
Old-fashioned words of tenderness still are,
Like echoes of the schoolroom where they claim
That eloquence beyond vocabulary,
The tiny kiss, the star beside each name.

There is, though, a tendency to rely too heavily on regular iambics to push the poems along, while the fine detail by no means always breaks free of the monotony. This is less of an impediment than it might have been, because that detail certainly abounds—vivid, humane, and continuously surprising.

[8] *Star Whisper*. By CAROL RUMENS. Secker & Warburg, £4.00.

[9] *Changing Sides*. By JOHN LEVETT. Harry Chambers/Peterloo Poets, £3.00.

Hints

Find ways to make the narrative compel,
I advise students; as, in retailing this,
you might lend the issue added poignancy
by being distanced—describe the electrified
overgrown line in cool botanical terms,
white cow-parsley, *Anthriscus sylvestris*,
adding the child with anthropological
detachment, ten years old, print dress, bewildered. . . .

Compelling, maybe, but mere narrative—
no moral or intellectual envoy.
Accentuate the dignified resilience
that humans, or some, are capable of still,
evinced in the sad braveness of the bereaved
whose daughter, being blind, observed no warning.

Peter Reading

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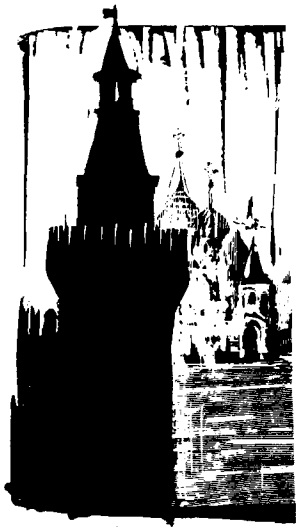
MEMOIRS

Neither straight nor blunt . . . .

The Incredible Story of Michael Straight

By Sidney Hook



I APPROACHED Michael Straight's *After Long Silence*[1] with a sense of foreboding. I had read most of the reviews of the book and had a general idea of its nature. The crucial years, I gathered, were the mid-1930s when as a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, Straight had been converted to Marxism and then inducted into the Communist Party cell at Trinity. I had an uneasy feeling of possible guilt that my *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* (1933) may have contributed to the evolution of Straight's thinking and that of his comrades.

This was not a matter of vanity on my part. My book, published by John Day, appeared during the middle of the drastic "Bank Holiday" in the United States, when American capitalism had sunk to its lowest point. Despite the apparent confirmation of the book's thesis, and some favourable reviews in Left-wing periodicals, it found few American readers. In England, however, where it was published later in the year under Gollancz's imprint, it had a very successful reception. The first I learned about this was from a letter Bertrand Russell wrote to V. F. Calverton who communicated its content to me. I also had word to the same effect from Harold J. Laski (who knew about me as a student of Morris R. Cohen, whom Laski professed to admire).

After reading a few pages of Straight's book I realised I need never have worried. The union of naivety and political fanaticism that characterised the thinking of Straight and his circle immunised them against any heretical work that criticised Engels or Lenin, and even Marx. And by the spring of 1935, the semi-official organ of the Communist Party of Great Britain, *The Labour Monthly*, had carried several articles on "The Meaning of Sidney Hook" by L. Rudas of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute (Moscow) in which my heresies were laid bare, and I was regarded as being hopelessly in the Fascist camp. Whatever my sins were, I was not even indirectly involved in the sentimental development of these fanatical young idealists whose political education came to an end as soon as they entered their Communist cells.

So it was that I read Michael Straight's book with a growing sense of incredulity at the crudity of its self-deception, and at the unlimited credulousness of many of its reviewers. It presupposes not only complete ignorance about how a Communist underground operates but about the theory and practices and history of Communist espionage, and its centre in the Kremlin. Even more, it would have us believe that a sophisticated young mind, who could take a First in Economics (not Marxist economics), who felt "that I had the power to lead my own generation and to take my place with leaders of England in debates", and for whom "the superstructure of Communist ideology was little more than 'a psychological pretence' ", that such a man could be some kind of zombie. To this day he seems unaware that his prolonged and stubborn silence about his involvement in the Soviet espionage apparatus, long after he claimed to have shed any trace of faith or loyalty to the Communist cause, in effect made him complicitous in the hundreds of deaths that were contrived by his erstwhile comrades.

I recall when I was in Germany in 1948, and again in the early 1950s, being told several times that hundreds of men and women in Eastern Germany who had sent information to the West about what was happening in their area had been picked up and had "disappeared." It now appears that someone whom Straight suspected had been recruited by Anthony Blunt as an agent for the Russian intelligence service (at the same time that Straight himself had been enrolled) served as "second in command of Intelligence Operations in the Allied Control Commission in Germany until 1952." No wonder! The harm that this one person did—and there were others of course, notably Burgess and Maclean—could be inferred from the fact that when Straight brought himself finally to talk in 1964, and the British Security officers confronted this traitor, he offered to confess only if he were granted immunity from prosecution. In his case it was refused; there was too much blood on his hands.[2]

Before chronicling the actions and events in which Straight was involved that seem altogether incredible to me, including his present judgments about them and his reconstructed motivations, I should mention one inadvertent piece of good fortune about his case. The truth about Straight was not made public

[1] *After Long Silence*. By MICHAEL STRAIGHT. Collins, £11.95; Norton, $17.50.

[2] There is considerable reason to believe that another Cambridge mole, who might have been exposed had Straight blown Burgess's cover, played a decisive role in the fate of nations. Roy Medvedev points this up in his interesting article in the *Washington Post* (19 June 1983) about Donald Maclean who was head of the "American desk" of the British Foreign Office and who accompanied Clement Attlee to the US when the Prime Minister visited to find out what American intentions were in Korea.

After MacArthur's brilliant Inchon landing which cut off the North Korean troops, the American-UN forces were advancing towards the Yalu River with complete victory in sight. At that time Truman categorically ordered MacArthur not to cross the Chinese border under any circumstances, and not to contemplate the use of atomic weapons. Stalin had been pressuring Mao Tse-tung to intervene; but Mao was naturally reluctant to have the war spread to China, especially since he was unaware of American intentions with respect to the possible use of the atomic bomb. The memory of how the Japanese war was brought to a finish was still quite vivid. Truman assured Attlee that there would be no invasion of China and no use of atomic bombs against the Koreans. Maclean informed the Kremlin, and Stalin relayed to Mao the content of Truman's order to MacArthur. On the basis of this information, Mao invaded North Korea; and the result was a protracted and bloody stalemate.

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when Senator Joseph McCarthy was riding high. Whatever initial credibility McCarthy had among the American public was the consequence of the Alger Hiss case[3] and the spectacle of an entire covey of high government officials invoking the Fifth Amendment when questioned about Soviet espionage activities. Imagine what McCarthy would have done with the Straight case! Talk about "Reds under the bed"! Here was someone in bed, so to speak, at the White House—a friend of the First Family, helped by the President to get a job at the State Department, and who ended up as one of Franklin Roosevelt's speech-writers. McCarthy might not have come a cropper for years!

IN ORDER TO EVALUATE Straight's story, and to determine the degree of its credibility, one must consider it in the context of what we know about Soviet espionage. Up to the point of the Moscow Trials (1936–38), Soviet agents enrolled abroad were primarily ideologically motivated. A considerable number among them consisted of members of the so-called Left and Right Communist opposition, retired from active political life by the Comintern's (really Moscow's) decree but given a opportunity to show their revolutionary devotion to "the workers' fatherland" by becoming Soviet agents. As Stalin's mania became more intense he began an active purge of the whole political class, particularly of foreign agents tainted by the slightest evidence of critical thought. In the mid-1930s, accompanying the purge (especially of those who refused to return to the Soviet Union), there was a need for new cadres, recruited now not from ideological veterans but from new idealistic converts, devoted to protecting the Soviet Union from the threats of war by Nazi Germany and the Japanese militarists.

Straight was recruited by Anthony Blunt, a teaching Fellow at Trinity; but it is clear that Blunt was acting for the Soviet Resident Agent in London. Writing in 1983 in an apologetic mood, it is questionable whether Straight is accurately reporting his true state of mind when he is suddenly told that he "must" return to an America he did not know or care for, after publicly breaking his political ties in England and simulating a nervous breakdown. He was to assume an active role in the US banking community in order "to reveal Wall Street's plans to dominate the World economy", and was told that the orders came from "our friends in the Communist International." Straight, who at the time—so he tells us—was expecting to run for Parliament for the Labour Party, in Plymouth, vehemently objected to the prospect of a life of deceit. Blunt gravely promised to relay his plea that his assignment be cancelled. He reported later that Straight's appeal had been denied; and when Straight still showed recalcitrance, promised that the matter would be laid before the highest Communist authorities. Within days Blunt informed Straight that Stalin himself (!) had reviewed the case. Thus began the career of the strangest Soviet agent in the history of Communist espionage.

THIS ACCOUNT SEEMS SO INCREDIBLE that Straight is hard put to make it plausible. "Why didn't I take Anthony [Blunt]'s scheme by the throat and fling away? These pages, I hope, have suggested the answer." They do nothing of the sort. If only he had been brought up with traditional loyalties, he opines, they might have held him in place. But how and why? After all, Blunt, Burgess and a whole flock of British traitors had been brought up with traditional loyalties. "If I had been self-centred . . . I would have asserted my own self-interest . . . I lacked the will to do that." He goes from one reason to another: perhaps it was "the innate submissiveness of the youngest child."

These are all transparent rationalisations. He had will enough. He did what he did in order to serve the Soviet Union, to defend the same cause for which his beloved John Cornford had died. That he was naive enough to believe that Stalin had taken time out in the Kremlin during the busy days when he was organising the Moscow Trials to ponder Straight's tiny case is evidence of Straight's simple-mindedness. But the fact that he believed the highest authority within the Communist world, even then emerging with the vestments of divinity, had selected *him* as a special agent certainly must have sustained his decision to accept the assignment and override any doubts or squeamishness he had about his underground role. The likelihood is that, as a dedicated neophyte, when the word came from the High Priest himself it must have put him in a state of euphoria.

Nor is it clear what role Straight played when, with the help of the Roosevelts, he procured a post in the State Department. In April 1938 his Soviet "control", Michael Green, put in an appearance. We have only Straight's account of his dealings with him. He gave Green four or five documents of general interest which Green returned to him after, presumably, photographing them. There is something bizarre about the behaviour of Michael Green who was later identified to Straight by the FBI as a well-known Soviet *apparatchik*. Allen Weinstein, the author of the authoritative study of the Hiss-Chambers case, points out that Green does not act at all like a typical Communist spy-master. With the resources of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of the USA, and the Soviet underground behind him, he asks Straight to help him "in finding a place to live in Philadelphia, and in obtaining a small business he could run. . . ."

Straight maintains that instead of giving Green copies of secret documents, he handed him criticisms of Stalin's policies after both the Nazi-Soviet Pact in 1939 and Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, with a request that they be forwarded to Stalin, which Green solemnly promised to do. Did Straight really believe Green would take such a risk? It would not have been Russian roulette, but a straightforward act of suicide.

NOR DOES IT SEEM PLAUSIBLE to me that the Kremlin made no effort to keep Straight engaged. Agents aren't permitted to break away with impunity. It is extremely unlikely that Stalin had anything to do with *recruiting* Straight. But once it was learned in Moscow that Straight was ensconced in the State Department, why would his Soviet officers leave him off the hook? He was so easily vulnerable to blackmail. By 1942 Stalin had learned the great value of high-placed espionage agents. Moscow had been saved by Richard Sorge's discovery of the Japanese intention to strike south, not west, which enabled Stalin to transfer Siberian troops from the Far East to Moscow in time. Potentially, Straight was of the highest value to the Kremlin, especially after 22 June 1941. To be sure, Straight insists that he had broken with Communism by 1941. But according to one reviewer (Shirley Letwin, *Sunday Telegraph*, 6 March 1983) he seems to have forgotten that in 1943 he was still proclaiming that Capitalism was finished and

[3] See, in ENCOUNTER, Sidney Hook, "The Case of Alger Hiss" (August 1978), and "Arguments (New & Old) about the Hiss Case" (March 1979).

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should be replaced by "an affirmative society." During the heroic days of Stalingrad this euphemism would easily have been construed as a sympathetic reference to the Soviet Union.

THE MOST PREPOSTEROUS of all Straight's unlikely explanations for his conduct is the reason he gives for finally revealing what he knew about Soviet espionage when most of the damage to the cause of the West had been done.

In one of his friendly interchanges with Blunt after Blunt (given a grant of immunity from prosecution) told his story to British security agents, Straight is asked: "Why did you act when you did?" He replies:

> "Because of the arts . . . because our government finally decided to support the arts."

Presumably he would have remained silent to this day if the government had not decided to support the arts. But what was so special or extraordinary about Federal support of the arts? Most nations of Europe had long supported the arts. Why did the opportunity of a relatively unimportant post with the US government become the occasion for a crucial decision which, if he had been guided by what he now says were his true political feelings, should have been taken long years before? After all, he had no real material need for a job then or at any other time.

The psychological need to perform some public service could have been fulfilled in some other way. No matter how strongly Straight desired the post, it did not require the revelation of his past. Some reviewers are under the impression that he owned up to the truth because otherwise the FBI routine investigation would have uncovered it. There is no good reason to believe this. Had Straight not personally confessed, the FBI investigation would never have uncovered his past connection, since he had no fear that Blunt or any of his Cambridge cronies would talk. It is puzzling to understand why Straight acted as he did at the time. He himself recognises that "The real question to be answered is: Why didn't I act long ago?"

Straight does not answer the question. It probably has no complete answer. I am convinced, however, that among the strongest of the emotions that enjoined silence was the fear that he would suffer the moral lynching that Whittaker Chambers endured at the hands of the ritualistic liberal community, the fury and contempt of the guilt-ridden "progressives" whose indifference to Communist penetration had prepared the way for Senator Joe McCarthy's demagogy.

What a study in contrast Michael Straight and Whittaker Chambers make! Chambers deserts the Communist movement just when Straight joins it—among other reasons because of the Moscow Trials, which Straight now asserts he never believed were valid. Whittaker Chambers was also a man born to believe, a romantic who was impatient with rational argument, and prepared to put his life on the line for his revolutionary faith. To relieve the sting he must have felt when he read Chambers' confession *Witness* (1952), Straight sneers at Chambers who sacrificed his livelihood, risked his life, endured contumely, reluctantly to testify against his fellow-conspirators—at first privately to A. A. Berle, when Stalin made his 1939 pact with Hitler, and then publicly a decade later, after observing that those he had previously identified were not only still active in high office but had ascended the ladder of influence. Contrasting his position with that of Chambers, Straight writes: "I believe simply that the acceptance of individual responsibility is the price we must pay for living in a free society." What moral posturing! It was Chambers who exercised his moral responsibility; it was Chambers who paid the price for the recognition that he was living in a free society, not Straight, who has suffered at most only a little discomfiture. To be sure, Chambers ended with the delusion, like Dostoevsky before him and Solzhenitsyn after him, that the loss of religious faith must inevitably lead to the loss of a free society; but, despite his fantasies, as Lionel Trilling said of him, "he was an honourable man."

THAT THE VIRULENCE of the disapprobation of Chambers' testimony in the intellectual and cultural community (to this very day, especially in England judging by the way Hiss is still thought of there) has something to do with the unwillingness of disillusioned members of the Communist underground to pay their dues to the free society that shelters them is evidenced by the following. According to Chambers there were definitely several underground Communist cells active in Washington during the 1930s. Only two were uncovered—one headed by Chambers, the other in which Elisabeth Bentley was involved. Chambers himself thought at first that his example would be followed, after general disillusionment with the Communist mythology set in following the Stalin-Hitler Pact. But not a single member of his own cell, with the exception of Julian Wadleigh, came forward: the rest either pleaded the Fifth Amendment, perjured themselves, or fled. No member of the other cells has been heard from.

IT IS NOT ONLY Chambers whom Straight disparages to make it easier to live with himself. He impugns the integrity of Norman Thomas, Richard Rovere, and other liberal opponents of both McCarthy and the Communists because, without taking a position on the legal validity of the accusations made against Owen Lattimore, they disputed the truth of Lattimore's statements that he had never been a "sympathiser or any kind of promoter of Communist interests." Lattimore had publicly hailed the Moscow Trials as evidence of the existence of democracy in the Soviet Union.

Straight is more indignant about some of Senator McCarthy's victims than about Stalin's victims and, in turn, those of Burgess and Blunt. But it is Straight's comments on Supreme Court Judge Felix Frankfurter, a friend of his parents who had put himself out to help Straight find himself, that suggests he has lost all sense of moral reality and proportion, not to mention humility. Visiting Mr Justice Frankfurter in 1956, he tells us he "sat in silence, filled with a cold disdain" as Frankfurter criticised the judicial absolutism of Hugo Black and William O. Douglas. "Cold disdain" for the leading advocate of parliamentary democracy on the English model, who had hammered out a doctrine of judicial restraint to prevent the judicial absolutists of the 1930s from nullifying New Deal legislation![4] With the burden of the knowledge of his own sustained betrayal of human rights and democratic values, one imagines Straight would have felt deeply uncomfortable in

[4] Rejecting the absolutism of property rights, Black with the faltering support of Douglas had made absolutes of the First Amendment Rights, ignoring the inescapable conflicts of rights, and the way in which rights limit other rights. Frankfurter was upholding the tradition of Holmes and Brandeis.

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Felix Frankfurter's presence rather than full of "cold distain" for him.

Perhaps the full measure of Straight's fantasies about himself and his role peeps out of the closing pages of his book. He takes umbrage at the British press for identifying him as someone who "spied for the Russians." He admits that he was a secret agent, that he was recruited as a "sleeper" by Stalin himself to burrow his way into the top echelons of American society and government. He admits knowledge of the activity of persons who were either active and dangerous spies for the Soviet régime or in a position to act as such. But he draws the line at the epithet "spy" applied to himself. He was dealing with a spy, Michael Green, who invited him to meet with Earl Browder, head of the Communist Party of the USA. At the time, Browder had long replaced Max Bedacht as liaison man with Soviet Intelligence. But Straight would have us believe that all he did was to "give my own appraisals of the political situation to a gentleman who called himself Michael Green"—as he puts it in a recent letter to the London *Times*.

LET US FOR THE MOMENT take Michael Straight at his word that he did not give any sensitive information to any Soviet secret agent. But the ordinary dictionary connotation of "spy" makes Michael Straight a spy for the Kremlin many times over. He did not bring a legal action for libel against the press, not because, as he claims, of the substantial costs (which he would have recovered had he won), and not because he wanted to avoid inflicting further pain on Anthony Blunt and others, but simply because he would have lost.

Straight seems not to understand what his moral infamy consists in. Even if he had in the flush of his sacrificial idealism betrayed a secret or two of the State Department to the Kremlin, all this would have been understandable and even forgivable if, after he broke with Communism, he had fulfilled his responsibility to his newly-found allegiance to the free world by exposing the Soviet agents who were in a position to destroy the men and women then serving the West, not for money but in the cause of freedom, especially in Eastern Germany and Europe. I find it difficult to believe that he finally broke with the Kremlin in his own mind when he says he did. And I am convinced that he himself is not sure. He swallowed horror upon Stalinist horror without public protest. Not even the Red Army's intervention in Hungary and Khrushchev's secret speech moved him to action. Only the momentous decision of the US government to support the arts!

To his credit Straight does not try to extenuate his moral failure by drawing an equation, as so many anti-American Englishmen did, between the excesses of Senator McCarthy's "witch-hunt" and Joseph Stalin's terror. He had learned enough about his native country to save him from the hysterical evaluation of McCarthyism by the Bertrand Russells and the Kingsley Martins (as well as by resident aliens like Hannah Arendt whose profound ignorance about America never prevented her from writing about it). Russell was so sure that Joe McCarthy would become President that he wagered on it. Arendt wrote Karl Jaspers to the same effect. Replying to Richard Crossman, who in the *New Statesman* after a flying visit to the United States in 1954 equated the American loyalty programme (whose features were fairer than the British security programme) with the Nuremberg Laws of the Nazis, Straight wrote:

> "I don't recognize the land [Crossman] describes. The loyal Americans I know are not fearful of infection. Those who suffered agonies from the Loyalty checks are all doing useful and constructive work. The young men from the F.B.I. who have come to me have never asked me to name a friend as a 'secret carrier' of Communism for what he said twenty years ago. And, if I knew of any 'secret carriers' in sensitive positions today, I wouldn't suppose that keeping that knowledge to myself was an affirmation of my liberal faith. I'm short of breath from shouting about the excesses of the Loyalty Program, but I know of no citizen branded traitor today because, yesterday, he practiced Americanism. As one of 'the opinion formers who supported the New Deal, Republican Spain and the Russian Alliance', I rub the neck that Mr. Crossman weeps for; I feel no scar. . . . I don't trust these people [Crossman and his friends] any more; I don't feel that they are my own. I have no compulsion to quarrel with a society that has permitted me to work for what I believe in."

This passage could very well serve as a reply to David Caute's grossly inadequate book on the period.[5]

None the less there is a contradiction in the passage. If he wouldn't suppose in 1954 that keeping quiet about Communist "secret carriers" in sensitive positions was exactly an affirmation of his liberal faith, why didn't he name those he knew were secret agents in sensitive positions in the British government earlier, when his liberal faith had been reborn? And why did he remain quiet for almost a decade (from the time he wrote the passage quoted above) before telling the truth? At least some lives would have been saved, since some busy little Soviet moles in British Intelligence might have been exposed.

IDEOLOGICAL ESPIONAGE ON A MASS SCALE is a modern phenomenon. It came into existence with the October Russian Revolution, the organisation of the third or Communist International, and the subordination of the revolutionary movement to the necessities of the "defence of the Soviet Union." Its mixture of idealism and treason is beyond the ken of conventional European diplomats, who even when they employed spies were as a rule as contemptuous of them as policeman are of their paid informers. Nations like the United States and Great Britain, to whom the notion of politics based on a *Weltanschauung* is alien, find ideological espionage very puzzling. And yet psychologically it is not difficult to understand. Once a person is seized by the Communist faith and becomes totally dedicated to its service, everything he does, regardless of how disloyal it appears to others, is justified in his mind as an act of higher loyalty to mankind. Hobbes and Bentham to the contrary, there are human beings who willingly, and sometimes joyfully, sacrifice their careers and lives to further what they regard as the common interest or good. As a system, communism may be a complex of fantasies, an intellectual disease if you will. But it is a disease of idealism!

This is not to say, of course, that every genuine Communist is a potential espionage agent. A thousand details, from an awkward stutter to weak nerves, may rule him out. But it is to say that whoever controls him has less to fear that he can be turned by money, power, or sex than agents whose secret services are bought in the market place. It is not surprising that

[5] See Sidney Hook, "Some Fables of American Fear & Terror", a critique of Caute's *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge under Truman and Eisenhower*, in ENCOUNTER, January 1979.

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a sincere and convinced Communist, given his political ideas and dedication, becomes a secret agent. Normally, even if we have to regard him as our enemy, he may still be an honourable man. It is when he keeps on serving his party and its cause after it betrays every one of his professed ideals, when it violates every moral value that transcends politics, that the idealist becomes an *apparatchik*, a dishonourable man. How could a genuine idealist who recognised the Moscow Show Trials for what they were—and who read Stalin's greetings to Hitler after the Soviet-Nazi Pact, or heard Molotov's declaration that "Fascism is a matter of taste", or learned of Stalin's surrender of the German Jewish Communists to the *Gestapo*, or who knew the truth about the Katyn massacre, or who pondered the Berlin Blockade, or observed the revolts of East German, Hungarian, and Polish workers against their oppressors—still remain faithful to the Kremlin?

WHEN I SPENT my Guggenheim-fellowship year in Germany in 1928–29, I met some students at the University of Berlin and Heidelberg who were under the influence of Stefan George and his Circle. They were strongly nationalistic and, to my surprise, sympathetic both to the *Stahlhelm* and to the Nazis. They could indeed be considered "idealistic", too. But for all their aestheticism and patriotism, any one of them who participated in, or approved of, the Holocaust would have been transformed into a human monster. Can we pass any other judgment on Communist idealists who became involved in the genocidal practices of the Stalinist régime, or who justified them as the "necessary cost" of social progress?

Those who attempt to extenuate the behaviour of the British and American Communists who served as Soviet espionage agents by comparing them to the high-born English Jesuits who also served as "agents of a foreign power" during the Elizabethan era overlook the profound difference in historical realities. The latter felt that they were fighting to preserve a universal civilised order, which even if it had prevailed would not have brought down the curtain of totalitarian darkness that everywhere follows the extension of Soviet Communist power. Nor did they live to witness the corruption of their animating ideals comparable to the transformation of the socialist dreams of the academic Cambridge idealists into a totalitarian nightmare.

ONE OF THE LESSONS of the recent history of British and American treason is the costly consequence of having disregarded the importance of early ideological allegiance in the recruitment of personnel in sensitive London or Washington governmental posts. One does not have to go as far as Keynes to believe that ideas rule the world more than interests. It is enough to recognise that ideas have certain consequences even if not all ideas are plans of action. But for Communists ideas are always integral to a programme of action. It is no easy thing to identify and evaluate the significance of youthful ideological allegiance in a security programme. Human beings grow and mature and often outlive their passionately-held early faiths. It requires some political sophistication not only to recognise this but to identify and differentiate between the various Socialist and Communist beliefs, the times when they were held, and the degree of involvement they entailed. The excesses of the American security programme were due to a lack of such political sophistication. Since some obtuse New Dealers believed that Communists were *au fond* merely liberals-in-a-hurry, some even more obtuse members of Security Boards suspected that New Dealers, not to mention Left-wing Socialists, Social Democrats, etc., were "soft" on Communism and therefore unreliable.

The British security system, on the other hand, seems to have suffered from a complete indifference to the ideological commitments of its intelligence officers or of individuals engaged in highly classified governmental work. There is no way a layman can assess the validity of Chapman Pincher's contention (in his recent book, *Their Trade is Treachery*) that there were some 200 examples of Soviet-bloc penetration of British Intelligence. But of more symbolic significance is the fact that although it was known that Klaus Fuchs had been a member of the German Communist Party, his identification as a Soviet agent was a consequence of American detection. And even after the Fuchs case, British Intelligence was informed that Bruno Pontecorvo had been an active member of the Italian Communist Party long before he defected to the Soviet Union with a considerable amount of secret data amassed from visiting American laboratories engaged in nuclear research. Lest I be accused of being a "witch-hunter" or a "spy-hunter" —favourite epithets hurled even against Rebecca West by those who regard the whole subject as unworthy of thoughtful concern by men of ideas or intellectuals—let me explicitly say that I do not regard membership in the Communist Party or any of its satellite organisations as either suffficient or necessary evidence of complicity in espionage affairs. All I am saying is that such membership on the part of a candidate for any office of any recognisable degree of sensitivity in or out of government warranted very careful inquiry.

I cannot speak with any authority about the state of US Intelligence, which seems to have been thoroughly demoralised by the charges in the 1970s of Frank Church's Senate Committee. So far as is known, its record with respect to resisting Communist penetration is rather better than that of British Intelligence. Nevertheless, I have heard "well-informed" rumours about Soviet moles within the CIA. I have also heard the rejoinder to such rumours—that so long as the CIA was headed by political primitives the Kremlin didn't need any moles. The reference was to lack of knowledge of the theory and practice of Communism. I have often wondered what the qualifications were for such a key post or why a blameless life as an investment broker or a desk-Admiral should be considered relevant in filling one of the most strategic positions in the defence of a free society.

ALL MY LIFE I have believed that, when it is relevant, knowledge always makes a difference. I acknowledge, of course, that knowledge and even intelligence may not be enough. I still believe that knowledge makes a difference, but I must confess to being baffled by the refusal to know, the unwillingness to listen, the smug self-righteous conviction that whatever the facts turn out to be they will make no difference to the position one holds.

It brings to mind a despairing remark of the late and still lamented Sol Levitas, editor and publisher of *The New Leader*, a modest social-democratic periodical in New York which during the early days of World War II strove to convince Washington that the Soviet Union should be supported as a co-belligerent against Hitler but not as a "democratic ally", and that the time when Stalin had most need of aid from the West was precisely the time to work out provisions for genuine self-determination by the peoples of Eastern Europe.

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The remark I advert to was made by Sol Levitas after a visit to Washington, where he had vainly tried to convince those in Roosevelt's entourage that the defeat of Hitler did not by itself spell the triumph of the Four Freedoms or the ideals of the Atlantic Alliance in Europe. He probably would have repeated it had he read the strange encomium of Straight in the paper to which he gave his life. "Sidney", he said in unwontedly mournful tones, "sometimes 'Schmuckism' can be as bad as Stalinism."

The reference is all the more *apropos* because, of all the places in which the Straight book was reviewed, it was only in *The New Leader* that Michael Straight was hailed as a moral hero, as someone who was never a Communist and never could be a Communist, albeit "a card-carrying member of the Communist Party . . . assigned to be a 'mole' at the behest of Stalin himself." And all because he wouldn't "snitch" on "friends"—friends who cheerfully would have hanged Sol Levitas as they did so many other fellow Social-Democrats in Eastern Europe. That Sol Levitas hasn't returned to rebuke the confused character who, by flukes of chance, finally acceded to editorship, seems to me the weightiest argument I know against the survival of personality after death.

Old Misery

" '*The house was like a church, for father's rule*
of silence was obeyed by all of us,
upheld by things through which you felt his will.
As butterflies became his specimens,

the antique chairs, chaise-longues and tables weren't
our furniture but property, and his.
His bookshelves muffled sound, the books absorbed
our talk, the tortured portraits had his eyes.

You only had to whisper, even if
he wasn't in—and then he'd soon appear,
annoyed to find you home; or just to cough
when walking past his room and he'd be there

like Mephistopheles—with furrowed brow,
the usual show of hurt and puzzlement. . . .' "
"Her very words", I said to Jack, "and now
you listen to Old Misery's lament. . . ."

We heard him talking to his friends: he thought
she had more sense, he was surprised at her.
He said she was ungrateful, though he ought
to be relieved, there'd been an "atmosphere."

"More like a smell", says Jack to me, and needs
to say no more, as when his mam abused
Old Misery for giving him his cards:
" '*Ye put our lad on t'dole, and after he'd*

been bloody working half his life for ye—
a good man who's worth more than all o' youse.'
If I were young there'd be no holding me.
I'd scrape this place's shite from off me shoes."

Neil Astley

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Two Confessions from Managua

An American & a Nicaraguan Tell Their Stories

"We Tried to Accept the Sandinista Revolution . . . ."

By Lawrence E. Harrison

THE SANDINISTA GOVERNMENT of National Reconstruction was installed four years ago, on 19 July 1979. Three days later, I arrived in Nicaragua in a Flying Tigers DC-8 stretch-jet loaded with food—the first of many such flights—to take charge of US assistance programmes, the most tangible evidence of our commitment to build a new relationship with Nicaragua.

I left Nicaragua two years later, on 1 July 1981. During those two years, the US government was the most important source of food aid and one of the most important sources of financial aid to revolutionary Nicaragua. We provided assistance valued at $120 million, including 100,000 tons of food. We had tried very hard to build that new relationship. But the effort failed, principally, I believe, because the Sandinistas could not live with a positive image of the US government. They did not try at all. And many in the United States cheered them on.

Within a few months of the installation of the Government of National Reconstruction, an article appeared in the Sandinista newspaper *Barricada* announcing the imminent arrival of 600 Cuban teachers. I called on the Minister of Education, with whom I had been working to reactivate an old school construction loan, to express concern that so large a number of Cuban teachers would be interpreted in the United States as a Cuban takeover of the Nicaraguan education system. The Minister replied that the government would welcome qualified teachers from any country.

I told him that the United States would certainly be interested in sending teachers, possibly through the Peace Corps. He responded, somewhat apologetically, "You know, we Latin Americans have a view of the Peace Corps which would make it an inappropriate vehicle."

He meant, "we Latin Americans of the Left." What he had in mind was symbolised by the movie *Blood of the Condor*, which depicts Aryan-looking Peace Corps volunteers engaging in genocidal sterilisation programmes in Bolivia.

At the end of 1979, as a result of the intervention of then Junta member Alfonso Robelo (who is now allied with ex-Sandinista Eden Pastora's guerrilla movement), we received Sandinista approval in principle to start a Peace Corps programme. After a lengthy study, the Peace Corps sent in a husband-wife team as co-directors. Both were experienced in Latin America, altruistic and totally committed to building a new relationship with Nicaragua. After six months of being fobbed off by the Sandinistas, they left. Not one Peace Corps volunteer was accepted.

We often expressed our concern to Sandinista officials about the line in the Sandinista anthem, "We shall fight against the Yankee, enemy of humanity." In November 1979, Jaime Wheelock, one of the most influential *comandantes* and a person with whom I sustained a very frank dialogue throughout my two years in Managua, told me that the word *poverty* was going to be substituted for *the Yankee*. Soon thereafter, I was told the same thing by then economic czar (and Stanford MBA) Alfredo Cesar, who has since defected. The change was never made.

At about the same time, a US congressional delegation, led by Representative Dante Fascell (Democrat, Florida), visited Managua at Ambassador Larry Pezzullo's initiative. Fascell was extremely effective, as were his colleagues, Lee Hamilton (Democrat, Indiana), Matthew McHugh (Democrat, New York), and David Obey (Democrat, Wisconsin). They pressed hard on the issues of political pluralism and non-alignment in very intense meetings with both the Junta, which was increas-

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ingly becoming a figurehead, and the Sandinista National Directorate, which is where the real power resides. The Congressional group was particularly forceful on the question of elections. In each session they were told that national reconstruction had to be the first priority but that the Sandinistas were committed to elections.

When Alfonso Robelo resigned from the Junta in April 1980, and went into opposition, he was promptly labelled a traitor by the Sandinistas. In a conversation with Jaime Wheelock, I tried to explain our concept of dissent. I got nowhere—there is no Spanish word that accurately captures the nuances of "dissent." A day or two later I experienced similar frustration in a conversation about dissent with a young US-trained Cabinet Minister who had on his desk a bottle of Cuban rum and a copy of *Das Kapital*. At one point, he suddenly beamed and said, in English, "Now I know what you're talking about—civil disobedience!"

He has since defected.

A few months later Larry Pezzullo and I were in Washington to lobby in Congress for the much delayed $75 million special appropriation for Nicaragua. The Sandinista Minister of Health, with whom I was working on several programmes, was also in Washington, and we had dinner together. During the conversation I complained about inaccuracies and distortions in *Barricada*, the official Sandinista newspaper, and *El Nuevo Diario*, which closely followed the Sandinista line. Both sounded very much like Cuba's official newspaper, *Granma*, particularly in their treatment of the United States. The Minister's response: "You don't understand revolutionary truth. What is true is what serves the ends of the revolution."

The August 1980 ceremony to celebrate completion of the literacy campaign was a chilling experience. I had been invited to sit with the *comandantes* and the Cabinet because AID had contributed food and some vehicles to the campaign. The ambassador sat in nearby stands with the diplomatic corps.

The Plaza of the Revolution was mobbed with kids in uniform shouting slogans in response to the urgings of leaders on the platform. I was reminded of films I had seen of Nuremberg in the 1930s.

Comandante Humberto Ortega gave the principal address. In the midst of a series of attacks on the United States, he announced that elections would not be held until 1985, thereby reneging on a commitment to opposition groups for early elections. Moreover, he assured his audience, the elections of 1985 would be nothing like the corrupted elections held in the United States. Larry Pezzullo and I both walked out.

My youngest daughter, Amy, then sixteen years old, worked during the summer of 1980 as a volunteer with a Nicaraguan organisation, Genesis II, which promoted breast-feeding and provided help to orphanages. The head of the organisation was Geraldine Macias, a former American Maryknoll nun married to Edgard Macias, Vice-Minister of Labour. At the end of the summer (shortly after the completion of the literacy campaign), we had a get-together at our house for Amy and her co-workers. The evening was a little strained because some of the Genesis II people were totally committed to the Sandinista cause and doubtless felt uncomfortable being in the USAID director's house. The Maciases may have felt that way.

Two years later, after the Sandinista security police threatened his life, Edgard sought asylum in the Venezuelan embassy. The Maciases and their children arrived in Washington soon thereafter. They were treated as lepers by many Left-leaning church people in the Washington area who had formerly been their friends. The Maciases have found it very difficult to get work and have been living on a shoestring ever since.

In a recent letter to friends, they said:

> "Since leaving Nicaragua we have had access to documentation of [the Sandinistas] and some of [their] former members that proves beyond a doubt that their plans from 1979 on were to deny political and religious freedom. Documents that also show how their methods resemble Somoza to the point they appear as a mirror image: rapes, torture, disappearances, murders, threats, and control of unions and community groups through the formation of their élite political party."

During the last part of 1980, the "Partners of the Americas" programme between the state of Wisconsin and Nicaragua, which had endured for some fifteen years, ran into trouble. Most of the activities were focused on the Atlantic Coast. Among other problems, the Sandinistas attempted to take over the Partners' educational radio station (they subsequently did take it over); two Wisconsin plastic surgeons were harassed during a visit to Puerto Cabezas, where they did some highly complicated surgery free; and the Sandinistas circulated the word that Partners personnel were CIA agents.

The ambassador sent a letter to the Junta expressing his concern, and I called on the *comandante* responsible for the Atlantic Coast. After I ran down the litany of problems, the *comandante* said, "You have to understand, Mr Harrison, that Americans are not very popular in this country." I replied that I had lived in Nicaragua for eighteen months, travelled extensively, and had the impression that, notwithstanding Sandinista efforts to paint us as devils, most Nicaraguans liked Americans. I added that this seemed to be particularly true on the Atlantic Coast.

He paused for a few moments, then broke into a broad grin and said, "You're right."

Norma Pineda, an accountant, was the senior Nicaraguan employee of the USAID mission, an admirable professional and human being. Her husband, Byron, had been a lieutenant colonel in a noncombatant unit of the National Guard. Just prior to their triumphal entry into Managua, the Sandinistas announced that National Guard members who had committed no crimes had nothing to fear. Despite the pleadings of family and friends to seek asylum in a nearby embassy, Byron Pineda chose to stay in his house because, as he told his wife, "I have done nothing wrong."

About two weeks after the installation of the Sandinista government, Pineda was arrested and much of his property was confiscated. He was tried some six months later and sentenced

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to eleven years in jail. As in thousands of other cases, all that was proven by the prosecution was that he had been a member of the National Guard.

A few months later, the Sandinistas told Pineda that he would be free if his wife would provide information on USAID activities to the government. She refused. He was, however, released to house arrest towards the end of 1980, perhaps because of representations the ambassador and I made at high levels of government. Shortly after, he was told that he would be returned to prison if he failed to persuade his wife to become a spy and if he refused to engage in spying activities himself.

A few weeks after that Norma Pineda left Nicaragua. Byron Pineda sought asylum in the Peruvian embassy in Managua, where he has lived for more than two years.

LATE IN 1980, the Latin American Studies Association, an organisation of US intellectuals interested in Latin America, held its annual meeting in Bloomington, Indiana. Junta member Sergio Ramirez and Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto attended and were given a hero's ovation. James Cheek (then deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America) was jeered and heckled. (Cheek, one of the Foreign Service's most distinguished and enlightened specialists on Latin America, had played a crucial role in US disengagement from Somoza as far back as 1974.)

In a subsequent Latin American Studies Association newsletter, Harvard Professor and Association President Jorge Dominguez described the Bloomington meeting as "one of the darkest moments of my professional life . . . appalling . . . scandalous . . . damnable."

I RETURNED TO the United States on 1 July 1981, and retired from AID early in 1982. I have been at Harvard working on a book on the relationship between culture and development. In December 1982 I was asked to appear on a panel at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. The principal speaker was Francisco Fiallos, then Nicaraguan ambassador to the United States. Despite a subdued speech on Nicaragua's economic problems, Fiallos was given a hero's ovation by the 300 people in attendance. My comments focused on Sandinista human rights abuses and, in particular, Sandinist reneging on commitments to pluralism and nonalignment. I was booed and jeered repeatedly.

One week later, Fiallos defected.

The Testimony of a Defector

THE RECENT EXPULSION of three US diplomats from Nicaragua was the product of a two-year plan, authorised at high levels of the Leftist Sandinista government in Managua, to discredit democratic opposition forces there through a web of false accusations, according to a former official of Nicaraguan state security. The former official, Miguel Bolanos Hunter, said he was in charge of surreptitiously filming American diplomats as part of the plan, and participated in meetings on the operation that were presided over by Lenin Cerna, director of the *Direccion General de Seguridad del Estado* (DGSE), the Nicaraguan Interior Ministry's department of state security.

Bolanos, 24, who led a 60-man guerrilla unit in the final battles that brought the Sandinistas to power in 1979, defected from Nicaragua six weeks ago by hijacking a light plane to Costa Rica. He has provided an unexpected intelligence bonanza for the very US agencies he worked against for the last three years. Bolanos had served briefly after the Nicaraguan revolution as special assistant to the Sandinista Army Chief-of-Staff Joaquin Cuadra. From January 1980 until his defection on May 7 he was an official of state security, nearly all of that time a counter-intelligence case officer with special responsibility for surveillance of "US Embassy and CIA activities" in Nicaragua.

Since leaving Costa Rica about three weeks ago as part of an arrangement with the US Embassy there, Bolanos has been debriefed extensively by State Department and CIA officials. Access to him was offered to reporters for *The Washington Post* by State Department officials, who arranged for meetings with Bolanos at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think-tank. *Washington Post* reporters interviewed him there for thirteen hours late last week, with no questions barred.

Various independent sources here and in Central America confirmed Bolanos' identity, though it was impossible to obtain confirmation of the details he provided of the secretive and influential internal security apparatus in Nicaragua.

BOLANOS' ACCOUNT includes detailed information about the presence and role of Soviet, Cuban, Bulgarian and East German advisers and assistance in the Nicaraguan security apparatus. The defector said their presence is extensive, with two high-ranking Soviet officers and a Cuban officer assigned as advisers to the 35 Nicaraguans in the counter-intelligence section where Bolanos worked. He said many more such advisers worked with other Nicaraguan military and security forces.

Among other things, Bolanos said:

- Nicaraguan intelligence has deeply penetrated the anti-Sandinista guerrilla groups that have been fighting a US-supported "secret war" against the Nicaraguan régime. The locations, armaments, personnel, and many other details of insurgent activity have been passed along for many months by Nicaraguan agents who, according to Bolanos, include a close adviser to Eden Pastora, leader of one of the three major insurgent groups.
- The assassination of exiled Nicaraguan leader General Anastasio Somoza in Paraguay, in September 1980, was

THIS DOCUMENT *was published, remarkably enough, in a left-liberal US newspaper which in ordinary circumstances would have gleefully "exposed" a "renegade" from the much-praised anti-Somoza Revolution. The staff writers, Don Oberdorfer and Joanne Omang, questioned ex-Sandinista Miguel Bolanos Hunter for thirteen hours —and the editors decided, in rather unusual fashion, "to play the story straight." It is an infrequent example of American reporting at its best, all the more gratifying for its appearance (19 June 1983) in "The Washington Post", which has featured some of the most unfortunate American reporting (viz. the notorious Janet Cooke Pulitzer-prize-winning canard).*

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planned in Managua with Cuban assistance. Bolanos said he knew Hugo Alfredo Yrurzun, the assassin who wielded the bazooka that blasted Somoza's automobile, as an interrogator in Nicaraguan state security in March 1980. Yrurzun was gunned down by Paraguayan police after the assassination.

- Public demonstrations and heckling during the visit of Pope John Paul II to Managua last March were orchestrated by Nicaraguan state security, which placed thousands of pro-Sandinista Catholics in prominent positions for the Papal mass and kept thousands of anti-Sandinista Catholics away. Bolanos said he helped control the event from an operation centre near the public square in Managua, and the pro-Sandinista slogans that interrupted the Pontiff's homily had been chosen in advance by the security apparatus.
- Planning and training for the spectacular and damaging raid by Leftist guerrillas in nearby El Salvador on the Salvadoran government military air base at Ilopango in January 1982, was centred eight miles from Managua in a Nicaraguan facility under the supervision of a Cuban adviser. This account, which Bolanos said he learned from the Cuban adviser, illustrates the extensive support Bolanos said Nicaragua gives to the rebels fighting against the US-backed government in El Salvador.
- About 80 Soviet-built MiG warplanes presently in Cuba have been designated for Nicaragua. Bolanos said he was told this by the head of the Nicaraguan Air Force, whom he identified as Raul Venerio. Because of US warnings against bringing MiGs on to the land mass of Central America, the current plan, according to Bolanos, is for the MiGs to be based in Nicaragua only after the expected Sandinista victory in elections there in 1985. Nicaraguan pilots who have been undergoing training in Eastern Europe will be ready to fly the jets starting next year, Bolanos said, and the planes would be flown on Nicaragua's behalf by an "international" group of Communist pilots if they were needed before 1985.
- Orlando Jose Tardencillas, a 19-year-old Nicaraguan "guerrilla" who embarrassed the Reagan administration by suddenly recanting his previous story before the Washington press in March 1982, was put up to this by Sandinista officials. Bolanos quoted Cerna, chief of Nicaraguan state security, as saying that Tardencillas had passed word from a prison cell in El Salvador that US officials wanted to use his participation in the Salvadoran war for propaganda purposes. According to this account, an order was secretly sent back to Tardencillas in prison to cooperate until he was brought before the American press and then to "turn around" to embarrass the US government. Tardencillas, who was permitted to return home after the famous press conference, is now a national hero and a Sandinista youth leader in Nicaragua, according to Bolanos.

"We won't stand for any interference in Nicaragua! . . ."
Frankfurter Allegemeine Zeitung

THE MAN TELLING THIS STORY is the Managua-born son of an American, Gloria Hunter, and a Nicaraguan, Dr Rodolfo Bolanos (an eye-ear-nose-and-throat surgeon). Young Miguel briefly attended several colleges in the United States before joining the Sandinista revolution against Somoza. His parents left Nicaragua for Miami, where they now live, after the revolutionaries took power. Because of his upper-middle-class background and American connections, Bolanos said, Cuban advisers opposed his application to join the highly sensitive state security apparatus. But they were overruled by high-ranking Sandinistas who had known Bolanos as a comrade-in-arms.

Bolanos himself benefited from those privileges as a "militant", or full member of the Sandinista Party, a status he said is enjoyed by only 600 to 800 people. Other accounts than anyone else in Nicaragua. But, as Bolanos told it, this experience also played a part in his growing disillusionment with the revolution over the years. In addition, he cited the distinct minority status of his revolutionary faction, the *terceristas,* within the predominantly more radical security apparatus, his growing conviction that Nicaragua is heading down a totalitarian path and, finally (and apparently most deeply felt), a sense of outrage at the luxurious living and special privileges of Sandinista leaders compared to the privations suffered by most of their followers.

Bolanos himself benefited from those privileges as a "militant", or full member of the Sandinista Party, a status he said is enjoyed by only 600 to 800 people. Other accounts have put party membership as high as 4,000. Party members are permitted to shop at special stores which offer items that are unavailable or strictly rationed elsewhere, Bolanos said, and this spring were permitted to buy Cuban-made television sets, stoves, and refrigerators at one-fourth or less of their open market prices.

Bolanos said the birth of a son last October was the beginning of the end. He determined then, he said, that "I'm not going to allow my son to become a slave or be in a slave system." After that, "my observations became more critical", and eventually he began to plan an escape.

DESPITE MANY PRIVILEGES and impressive powers, internal security officers are not permitted to have passports or to travel abroad. But Bolanos was able to obtain a passport and exit permit for his wife and infant son to "visit relatives" in Costa Rica. They left Managua on a commercial airliner the morning of May 7.

As soon as he confirmed their departure, Bolanos boarded a light plane he had chartered the previous day to take him to a city near the Nicaraguan-Costa Rican border. As the aircraft approached its destination, he said, he drew his gun and ordered the pilot to continue across the border and land at an

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airport in Liberia, Costa Rica. Bolanos said, and Costa Rican authorities confirmed, that he was taken into custody and charged with air piracy.

Just what happened next is murky and reportedly was the subject of high-level discussions between Costa Rican and US authorities. The result was that Bolanos was released from custody and left Costa Rica under US auspices. Bolanos said there were "no conditions" on his entry to the United States, pointing out that he has a claim through his mother to American citizenship, for which he has now applied. When he crossed the Costa Rican border, he was carrying an expired US passport, which he had obtained during his student days as the son of an American woman.

He denied that he agreed to make public what he knew as a condition of coming here. He said the idea of telling his story to journalists was his from the beginning. He is not being paid by the US government, Bolanos said, nor has he been promised any protection. In order to remain unnoticed in the midst of the American people, he declined to have photographs published in which he could be recognised, although his picture is on file in Managua.

A spokesman at the Nicaraguan Embassy here, Angela Saballos, said yesterday that the Embassy is aware of Bolanos' defection but added, "He was not in a decision-making position, so he did not have any inside information."

EVENTUALLY, BOLANOS SAID, he hopes to fight for a new, non-Communist, democratic revolution in Nicaragua, "maybe from some place closer to Nicaragua" than the United States. He declined to be more specific.

Bolanos described the atmosphere in Nicaragua's security apparatus as full of intrigue, aided and in some respects complicated by the presence of the experienced outsiders from Communist countries. About 2,800 to 3,000 Nicaraguans in the Department of State Security are aided by about 70 Soviets, 400 Cubans, 40 to 50 East Germans and 20 to 25 Bulgarians, according to Bolanos. He estimated there there are about 2,000 Cuban military personnel in the country, most of them posing as teachers.

He said the Soviets, who used Cuban-adapted manuals of the *KGB*, the Soviet secret police, have provided Makarov automatic pistols as a comradely gesture to Nicaraguan security officers. He described the Russians as high-ranking—with one of the two Soviet officers assigned to his F2 section a colonel in the *KGB*—but relatively restrained in their intervention compared with the Cubans.

Last year, for the first time according to Bolanos, the Soviets supplied sophisticated bugging devices to the Nicaraguans. Next year, he said, high-level Nicaraguan security agents are scheduled to attend a special *KGB* school in Moscow rather than be trained entirely in Cuba. The other Europeans have less importance, according to Bolanos, who said that the East Germans are mainly advisers on hidden microphones and technical operations. They also direct advisers and participants in the sub-section of F2 that operates against the West Germans and other European embassies, he said. The Bulgarians have "a small centre" to process information and supply occasional advice.

AS BOLANOS TOLD IT, the Cubans are in on just about everything and make their presence felt with a constant stream of advice bordering on directions. Bolanos said that shortly before his defection an argument broke out in the F2 section, with the Cuban adviser taking sides in a divisive way. As a result, he said, Cerna and other officials had the adviser sent back to Cuba.

Bolanos said that, like many Nicaraguan security officials, he was schooled in Cuba. He spent four months in mid-1980 at a school in a special security base south of the Havana airport where, he said, many teachers held classes for Nicaraguans in the mornings and for Angolans in the afternoons.

The chief Cuban adviser to Cerna, whose working pseudonym is "Mayan", and several other Cubans were among those who worked on the plan to discredit the democratic opposition in Nicaragua by concocting a false conspiracy linking them to US diplomats, according to Bolanos. "This is an element of the big strategic plan", he said, "to eliminate all effective opposition to Sandinista rule by 1985, when national elections are to be held to resoundingly endorse the Sandinista régime."

Agents were used to lead American diplomats into suspicious situations, he said. He added that his unit of the F2 section was assigned to provide films of US diplomats meeting Nicaraguans from democratic opposition parties and factions, the Catholic Church, labour units, the press and the private sector.

FOR SIX MONTHS, Bolanos said, he was in charge of shadowing Linda Pfeifel, political affairs officer of the US Embassy. Bolanos said he supervised the bugging of Pfeifel's house and, on one occasion, personally searched her belongings. "I knew everything about her", he said. "I knew where she went and what she did. I even knew what kind of deodorant she uses."

A great deal of film was shot over many months with Americans and their Nicaraguan contacts unwittingly in the starring roles, according to Bolanos, who said the idea was to produce a motion picture that would dramatically "expose" the supposed conspiracy. He said the whole plan, which recently was given the name of *Operation Spiderweb*, originally had been scheduled to be unveiled at the end of April with the expulsion of some American diplomats. It was postponed, Bolanos said, because of the desire to obtain more "incriminating" documentation. It was after he left Nicaragua, Bolanos continued, that the security services added a final detail: the charge that Pfeifel supplied to a double agent a bottle of poisoned liqueur intended to be given to Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto.

This was the high point of a 6 June press conference in Managua, in which Cerna participated and where videotapes were shown with James Bond-style sound track, announcing the expulsion of Pfeifel and two other US diplomats on espionage charges. The Reagan administration, which by then had been forewarned by Bolanos, responded on June 7 by closing all six Nicaraguan consulates in the United States and expelling their 21 diplomatic personnel.

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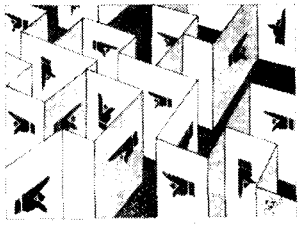
The Art of Putting Ambivalent Questions

How "Shaky" are the Germans on the "Peace & Missiles" Question?

By Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann



THE QUESTION HAS BEEN raised yet again: how reliable is current research into public opinion? "If we are to have any faith at all in the most recent opinion polls . . ." wrote Heinrich Böll happily, on his way to a peace demonstration on behalf of "the German People." And indeed, for once the situation seemed to be perfectly clear, for—according to a survey conducted for the television programme *Polit-Barometer*—three-quarters of the population were against deployment of medium-range missiles in the Federal Republic if the negotiations in Geneva should fail! Whatever the German government decided to do, it was therefore bound to be aware that an overwhelming majority of the population would oppose its policy if the missiles were deployed as planned. At one fell swoop, the TV survey appeared to do away with any need for a debate about the attitude of the German citizenry.

A few months earlier, at a working conference of political scientists at the University of California in Long Beach, I had spoken on the question of NATO's deployment of medium-range missiles and described how completely contradictory results—majorities in favour of the NATO two-track decision, majorities against it—can depend upon the way in which questions on this topic are formulated. Such a situation is too inviting not to be exploited in heated political debate. A reporter, only human in his biases, can take his choice as to which image of the population's attitude he wants to present.

The commentator on ZDF's *Polit-Barometer* programme, broadcast on 4 July, had chosen two questions. The first one read:

> "*The Soviet Union and the USA are currently conducting disarmament negotiations about medium-range missiles in Geneva. If these negotiations do not produce agreement by the autumn, what should happen next?*"

The respondents had been presented with three possible choices, and 72% decided in favour of the first choice, "*Continue to negotiate about disarmament, and do not deploy any new missiles in the Federal Republic.*" Of the others, 22% thought the government should "*Continue to negotiate about disarmament, but at the same time deploy new missiles in the Federal Republic*", while 2% were in favour of "*Break off disarmament negotiations and deploy new missiles in the Federal Republic.*"

The second question used to characterise the population's mood read:

> "*Assuming that new missiles were to be deployed in this area, would you agree with this or would you not agree with it?*"

"*Would agree*", said 21%; "*Would not agree*", said 79%. And the TV commentator, Horst Schättle, explained:

> "These figures make it evident that there is a discrepancy between official German national security policy and the majority opinion of the population. . . . It is also notable that the deployment of medium-range missiles, as at present discussed, is rejected by a majority of Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union voters and Free Democratic Party voters."

This sweeping general statement is, however, totally unjustified. The results from four Allensbach surveys of August 1983 clearly contradict such an assumption.

EVER SINCE MAY 1981, when the *Kirchentag*, the Protestant Church Convention in Hamburg, launched the peace movement's opposition to NATO deployment of medium-range missiles, Allensbach surveys have posed the following question:

> "*The* NATO *two-track decision was made some time ago. According to this decision, the* NATO *countries have agreed, on the one hand to station missiles in Europe to offset the Soviet medium-range missiles, and on the other hand to take the initiative in disarmament talks with the Soviet Union. All in all, do you think this two-track decision is a good one, or not?*"

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Whenever this question was posed, approximately half of the respondents said "*Gut*", while 20–25% said "*Nicht gut.*"

There was a public dispute among various journalists about the form in which this question was posed, with Horst Schättle arguing that the two-track decision should not be presented in a single question, since if two modes of action are combined it is impossible to tell which aspect the population agrees with and which one it may be rejecting. But I do not believe that it is expecting too much to ask someone to express agreement with or rejection of something as important as the two-track decision. After all, it constitutes a "package": either both modes of action must be accepted or, if one of them is not accepted, both must be rejected.

However, the basic rule of public-opinion research, which requires that a large number of questions be used to investigate attitudes on complex problems, certainly applies here. We therefore asked a second question, which was very similar in content to the ZDF TV network's question in content, although the way the response alternatives were formulated was much simpler.

> "*If the Geneva disarmament negotiations have not yielded any results by the time they end in October, and the Soviet Union keeps its SS-20 missiles pointed at Europe, should the new American Pershing II medium-range missiles be deployed in the Federal Republic as provided for by the* NATO *two-track decision, or should they not be deployed?*"

In this case the responses did not produce a majority against deployment of the new missiles in the event that the negotiations in Geneva failed. In August 1983, 40% said "*Should not be deployed*", 37% said "*Should be deployed*", and 23% were "*Undecided.*" A clear majority of Christian Democratic voters stated that the missiles should be deployed.

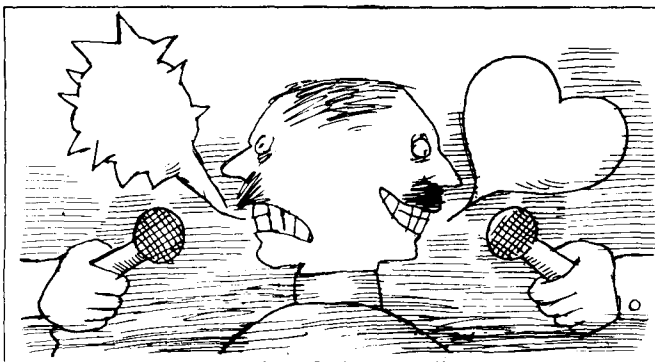
ANOTHER QUESTION asked in the Allensbach survey strikes home to the respondents in much the same way as the ZDF television network question about the extent of agreement with deployment of new missiles on one's home ground (in one's own neighbourhood, so to speak). But this question is realistic, and the results are very different.

> "*Assume we have a choice only between withdrawing from* NATO *or deploying the new American missiles in our country. What should we do? Withdraw from* NATO, *or deploy the new missiles?*"

A majority (46%) responded, "*Deploy the new missiles*", while only 22% said "*Withdraw from* NATO." The ZDF majority of 72% opposed to deploying the missiles had shrunk to 22%! Even the Social Democratic opposition supporters were divided, with 34% favouring deployment of the new missiles, and 30% withdrawing from NATO. The Greens are not divided: 73% favoured withdrawing from NATO. Women are least inclined towards deployment; only 38% responded "*Deploy the new missiles*", as opposed to 54% of the men.

FINALLY, two questions were aimed at the heart of the NATO two-track decision, i.e. the establishment of an East-West equilibrium. The first of these questions read:

> "*At present, is there a balance between the medium-range missiles the East has and the medium-range missiles* NATO *has, or is there not a balance?*"



Public Opinion Polls

THE *famous last words of the writer's death-bed scene—"What is the answer? What is the question?"—are surely paradigmatic for our sceptical century. Our most characteristic modes of response have been either to answer a question with another question, or to replace both with yet another.*

It is well known that indisputable sociopolitical truths of public-opinion research can be cast into doubt simply by rephrasing the original enquiry: changing a word, putting a verb into the subjunctive, insinuating an additional suggestion. Professor Noelle-Neumann, who is one of Germany's leading opinion researchers—she teaches at the University of Mainz and directs the Institut für Demoskopie in Allensbach—analyses an important and dramatic demonstration of how to ask one-sided questions and get one-sided answers. But will such methodological scepticism cool the heated subjectivities of the current German debate over missiles, rockets, and the NATO *alliance?*

For the first time the opposition to post-War Germany's Western alliance has been able to claim legitimacy from something that appears to be "the great majority of the German people." Taken by themselves the various strands of the German Peace Movement are small minorities, quite capable of bringing large crowds into small streets and open squares, but without the popular mandate of the democratic process. The proper pacifists are tiny bands; the Greens amount to 6%; the Social Democrats, now moving more to the anti-American Left, had in the last elections (which Chancellor Kohl won handsomely) a new electoral low. Yet taken all together they have been winning a famous propaganda victory, a signal triumph in the "battle of ideas." On a recent tour of the Bundesrepublik I heard one ringing argument more than any other: namely, that "We in the Peace Movement, opposing Cruise and Pershing, represent the overwhelming majority of the people! The Government's plan to put new modern American weapons into position lacks real popular legitimation!..." The convenient statistic at hand is from one public opinion poll which gives the opposition to NATO *modernisation a surprising figure of 76%.*

To be sure, if the questions are put a shade less blandly, a degree more alarmingly, then the end results differ by ten, twenty, or even thirty percentage points. The fact of the matter is that all polls confirm that on the questions of West German adherence to NATO *for national protection and of general fear of Soviet military superiority, a similar figure of 76% can be reached. How, then, do three-quarters of one and the same population seek military solidarity with its Western Allies (especially the USA), go on to express deep concern over the new Soviet SS-20s pointed at them, and at one and the same time be against accepting those weapons which would help restore a balance-of-power and a reassured sense of West European safety?*

It is a puzzlement, and the confusions and contradictions of West German public opinion are indeed unprecedented. The message is, according to the pollsters, bad news; can it be that at least in this case the messengers are at fault?

M.J.L.

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"*There is a balance*", 13%; "*There is not a balance*", 50%; "*Undecided*", 37%. The follow-up question was:

> "*Do you think it is necessary to have a balance between the medium-range missiles the East has and the medium-range missiles* NATO *has? Or is it not absolutely necessary?*"

"*Is necessary*", said 59%; while 24% said, "*Not absolutely necessary.*" The Greens expressed great unanimity, with 20% saying "*Necessary*" and 60% "*Not absolutely necessary.*" They are poles apart from the Social Democratic supporters, of whom 53% responded, "*An equilibrium is necessary*", and 31% "*Not necessary.*" Given a straight choice, 51% of the Greens were in favour of withdrawing from NATO, with only 28% opposing it. Only 12% of Social Democratic supporters wanted to see a withdrawal from NATO, while 68% responded "*Remain a member.*"

ARE THESE RESULTS CONFUSING? They should not be, even though they are contradictory, and therefore bound to be disappointing to those who want things clearly defined (as in the theses, "The population does not want the missiles to be deployed" against "The population wants the protection of NATO, wants an equilibrium, and therefore also favours deployment if the negotiations in Geneva fail"). After all, having contradictory wishes and goals is a common experience in political life, as it is in personal affairs. How could public-opinion survey research possibly resolve this conflict? When it comes to controversial topics we must simply take care to draw proper conclusions from given survey-research results, and constantly pose a variety of questions from different points of view, rather than base reports on just one or two questions and hence on one perspective only.

For almost three years now, the German population has been subjected to very considerable propaganda pressures. Take the question of "Unilateral Disarmament" by the West. Between July 1981 and August 1983, seven Allensbach surveys were conducted in which a "dialogue" was presented, in the following wording:

> "*I think we will only make progress with disarmament if one side takes the initiative. That would be proof of good will that the other side can't ignore. This would really lead to peace and to the relaxation of tensions.*"

The opposite position is:

> "*I see things differently. The government that initiates unilateral disarmament lays itself open to possible attack. It is subject to blackmail and thus contributes more to insecurity than to peace between East and West.*"

In July 1981 a majority of 47% were opposed to Unilateral Disarmament, with 33% in favour of it. However, this majority was reduced in stages: by August 1983, only 37% were opposed to Unilateral Disarmament, with a majority—an increase from 33% to 46%—in favour.

A similarly slow but persistent change is observable in attitudes on the question,

> "*Should we collaborate equally closely with America and Russia in the future, or more closely with Russia, or more closely with America? What is your view?*"

Ever since the end of 1982 the view "*Equally closely with America and Russia*" has steadily gained ground. In June 1983, 47% were of this opinion—as opposed to 42% favouring closer relations with our partner in the NATO alliance, America.

IT IS PROBABLY NO ACCIDENT that a concept from geology has become fashionable of late—the concept of *Verwerfungen* (fissures). For it is a fact that in this battle for public opinion incompatible attitudes on certain questions exist side by side, producing contradictory points of view. Thus we are faced with the paradox that almost half the population thinks that we should work equally closely with America and Russia in foreign policy, while approximately 60% state that they agree with the phrase from the declaration made by Chancellor Helmut Kohl in October 1982 and restated in May 1983: "The firmly-rooted friendship with the United States of America will remain at the heart of the alliance."

In addition, faith in the USA coming to the defence of West Germany in the event of an attack by the Soviet Union has not been shaken. We have results that go back 25 years on the question:

> "*If the Soviet Union tried to take over West Germany, do you think that the Americans would help us, or would they not risk a war for our sake?*"

In 1958, 61% said, "*Would help us*"; the corresponding figure in 1983 is 62%. "*Would not risk a war for our sake*" was the opinion of 19% 25 years ago, and this remains unchanged today.

A battle of ideas and sentiments is going on. Is this psychological war being taken seriously enough? One of the Social Democratic posters before the West German elections of 1983 showed a young man debating with Hans-Jochen Vogel, the SPD candidate for Chancellor. "Sheer madness (*Heller Wahnsinn*)", says the young man, in despair. "Our country is overflowing with arms, and now even more missiles are to be emplaced. . . ."

Isn't it easy to see why new missiles strike young people as madness? Wouldn't it be a good idea—even if the rationale is purely psychological—to follow up the suggestion made by Günther Gillessen (in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 June 1983), that for each Pershing II which is deployed a Pershing I be scrapped? Our Allensbach survey of last August contained two questions on this:

> "*For some time now there have been American Pershing I missiles in the Federal Republic. Did you know this, or is this the first time you have heard of it?*"

The response of 67% was "*Knew this.*" The question which followed was put to everyone, regardless of how they had answered the first question.

> "*It has been suggested that one of the older Pershing I missiles be scrapped for each Pershing II that is deployed, so that the number of missiles does not increase. Do you think that this is a good suggestion, or is it not a good suggestion?*"

"*A good suggestion*, replied 46%, while 27% thought it "*Not a good suggestion.*" The latter were then asked:

> "*And why not? Is it because security would suffer, or because you don't want to have any Pershing II missiles?*"

Only 18% of the population said they did not want to have any Pershing IIs in the Federal Republic at all, and that was why it was not a good suggestion. Even among young people under the age of 30, only 24% gave this reason.

THE REPLACEMENT OF THE Pershing I by the Pershing II would make it clear to groups of the population which are not interested in military technology that what is involved here is *modernisation* rather than madly cramming ever more arms

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into the country. But the insight that it is "modernisation" rather than simply "an increase in arms" that is involved is not in itself sufficient to dispel doubts. At the heart of opposition to NATO deployment of medium-range missiles lies the sense among large segments of the population that new weapons represent a threat rather than a better form of protection. It would not occur to anyone, I think, that to pocket a revolver when someone finds himself in a dangerous situation would be to endanger rather than protect himself. But where military arms are concerned the level of abstraction alters the situation. Two views were contrasted with each other in an Allensbach survey in August:

> "*I am in favour of deploying the Pershing II missiles, because more modern weapons mean more security.*"

With this view 31% agreed, while 48% agreed with the opposite view:

> "*Stronger weapons mean increased danger. This is why I am opposed to having the Pershing II missiles deployed.*"

A cartoon published recently in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* illustrates the dilemma. Two sides are shown confronting each other in mutual incomprehension. One side carries a poster with the slogan: "*We want to live without fear. Therefore: Let's arm!*" The other side counters with: "*We want to live without fear. Therefore: Let's disarm!*" When presented with the cartoon, and the question: "*Views differ about how peace can best be assured. If you take a look at this illustration, which group do you tend to belong to, the Gs or the Hs?*", 15% of the respondents agreed with the first side—arms represent protection. The second side, where arms represent a threat, was supported by 47%.

THE SUPPORTERS OF WEST GERMAN governmental policy—the proponents of the NATO two-track decision initiated by Chancellor Schmidt's administration, and now defended by Chancellor Kohl's Conservative government—are clearly under pressure from the changing climate of opinion. A number of indications point to this. Opponents of Missile Deployment feel that they are absolutely in step with majority opinion: 72% of them say that "*Most people are against it*", and 53% expect their side to gain in strength in the future. The supporters of Deployment, in contrast, are full of doubts: only 42% believe that the majority is on their side, and they tend to expect their side to suffer a reduction rather than increase in the future. These appraisals of the overall mood influence self-confidence, the self-assurance with which individuals and groups stand up for their opinions. And this, in turn, either strengthens the climate of opinion or weakens it. The proponents of the NATO two-track decision are now decidedly less self-assured about expressing their convictions in public than they were two years ago, when the debate began.

None the less, with the German population expressing such conflicting opinions on the subject of Missile Deployment, it seemed unlikely that the "*Heisse Herbst* (hot autumn)" would develop as forecast. If the mood of protest required for this had actually been prevalent, expectations of a "hot autumn" would have been on the increase. But the contrary was true. A question we put in July and August read:

> "*If the disarmament talks in Geneva fail this autumn, and new American medium-range missiles are deployed, do you expect that there will be serious unrest, or do you think there will just be demonstrations?*"

In July, the responses were divided, with 42% expecting "*Serious unrest*" and 41% believing that there would "*Just be demonstrations*." By August those expecting serious unrest had dropped to 36%; and 48%, rather than 41%, expressed the belief that only demonstrations were in the offing.

The course of the Peace Movement's "Action Week (16–22 October) showed that these anticipations of decreased excitement did in fact provide a correct forecast. The "hot autumn" widely prophesied by journalists—and in some projections almost akin to a civil war—did not take place.

The List

When at last she died
in the nursing home, where nuns
whispered along the Spanish-tiled passages,
she left a list, in shaky writing:

These are my things:
the small chair by the window,
the picture by the bed,
the blue ginger jar
and the box of photographs.

I folded the paper, laid it
in the empty ginger jar
and replaced the lid.
Some things don't bear reading twice.

Connie Bensley

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The Limits of Manipulation

What "Big-Brother Psychology" Cannot Do

By H. J. Eysenck

MUCH OF SOCIAL INTERCOURSE, political activity, and industrial management consists of attempts to manipulate other people—ostensibly for their own benefit, often for our own. These attempts are not usually very successful, and it has recently been suggested that perhaps psychology might help us to make them more so: more effective, more persuasive, with greater "impact."

It has even been argued that tyrants like Hitler or Stalin have actually used "fundamental psychological principles" of one kind or another; but this I may be permitted to doubt. Like other tyrants before them, they used terror and lies, exploited bribery and corruption in an attempt to get their own imperial way, rather than refined theorems of modern psychology.

The obvious failure of these short-lived barbaric exercises in manipulation seems odd at first. Communism has held exclusive dominance over Soviet Russia for something like three generations; but the apparatus of terror, the secret police, and the threat of the armoured divisions' tanks in the city centres are still needed to keep the population cowed. There is no enthusiasm for the doctrines of Communism, preached endlessly to young and old alike; and leaders of the Soviet Union themselves have acknowledged the failure of many of their ideological attempts to make their subjects work harder, drink less, and end corruption. If the modern police state, with a full apparatus of the techniques of terror and persuasion at its command, cannot apparently influence people, what is it that has conceivably gone wrong?

One obvious answer is, of course, that much of our behaviour is programmed genetically, and that outside interference does not touch this genetically-determined core. To take the most obvious instance, the Communist dictators have attempted to reduce intellectual inequality by introducing, as far as possible, equality of living conditions, equality of educational opportunities, equality of medical care, and many other equalities as well. Yet recent research in Warsaw has shown that in spite of all these efforts the variability of intelligence was under Socialism just as great as it has been found to be in capitalist countries. Bright children are just as bright (and, alas, dull children just as dull) in Warsaw as they are in Paris, London, or New York. The equalisation of certain external conditions has had practically no effect whatsoever on this inequality of talents and abilities. Clearly, genetics sets a limit to what can be accomplished by environmental manipulation.

Much the same is true of personality. The major dimensions of personality have been found to be as strongly inherited as intelligence; and these personality factors powerfully influence much of human conduct. Thus, early dreams of eradicating criminality, prostitution, insanity, neurosis, alcoholism, and many other social evils have failed completely; indeed, some of these, such as alcoholism, are even more noticeable now than they were when the revolutionary new order supplanted the previous *ancien régime*. Communist apologists used to argue, in times gone by, that there was no criminality or prostitution in Communist countries; but even they have abandoned these claims in the face of stubborn reality.

In a similar way it used to be said that workers would not suffer from "alienation", and would work hard and cheerfully when the fruits of their labour did not go to heartless employers as the results of simple class exploitation. Again the facts contradict the premise: a coal worker in Poland, or Czechoslovakia, or the USSR would find it difficult to notice the difference between working for the hard-faced capitalist employer or the hard-faced political commissar; as far as he is concerned conditions are identical—except of course that in a capitalist country he would be earning far more, have much better living conditions, and have a definite say in both the conditions of work and his remuneration, through an independent trade union. Indeed, given that the nature of the work is identical regardless of the ideology of the régime which governs a given country, it is difficult to see why anyone should have assumed anything different.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS constitute another obvious example of the powerlessness of much of modern manipulation propaganda. Religion still maintains a stubborn hold on the citizens of the USSR; and in Poland in particular the Catholic Church is becoming more and more powerful, rather than less. Suppression, since the early days of Christianity, seems to have the opposite effect to that intended; manipulation of people to persuade them to give up religion often has the very opposite effect. Again it has been argued, and I think

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shown, that religious belief has a genetic basis: in the sense that many people are genetically predisposed to seek religious outlets, just as others are predisposed not to do so.[1] Manipulation is extremely difficult, whether it attempts to make the former give up their religious beliefs, or induce the latter to accept them. Outward compliance may be rather easier to ensure; but inward conviction is not procured in this manner.

Other behaviour patterns which are, to a large extent, determined by genetic factors are selfishness and aggression, on the one hand, and kindness and altruism on the other. Large-scale and world-wide experiments with twins have shown that all these types of behaviour have a strong genetic basis, and are difficult to change by persuasion or any other kind of manipulation. It is possible to *suppress* or *encourage* one type of behaviour or another, of course, by having the State supervise and spy upon every action, very much as in Orwell's book the State intruded through reversed television on the privacy of the citizen. However, the moment direct supervision is removed, behaviour will revert to what is acceptable to the individual, rather than to the State. As Napoleon once said, you can do anything with bayonets except sit on them. Man is an eminently sittable creature.

THIS IS NOT TO SAY that attempts at manipulation may not have transient and apparently quite powerful effects. Since Orwell wrote his book, the idea of "brain-washing" has become almost an obsession with writers on the politics of dictatorship, and many miraculous qualities are assigned to the techniques supposedly making up this new terror weapon. It is extremely difficult to discuss this topic sensibly, because there are no scientific experiments which have been performed in these fields or, if they have been, they have certainly not been published in the usual psychological and psychiatric journals. This is, of course, what one might expect; the work, if it is done at all, is done behind closed doors by military and secret-service personnel, and they would not be likely to publish their results, or even let on that anything of the kind is being done.

However, some psychiatrists, such as William Sargant, have made claims that the use of Pavlovian methods can lead to a kind of personality and attitude change in prisoners which could not be accomplished by any of the orthodox methods of the past. The possibility, of course, is there but, from broad psychological principles, I would very much doubt if there was any substance to such a belief. Brain-washing is little more than a modern word for torture, and torture has always been extremely effective in producing confessions, and causing people to behave in ways they would not normally wish to adopt. I doubt very much if the torturers serving Hitler or Stalin could teach their colleagues of the Inquisition a great deal; modern methodology using electric shocks, etc., may be more sophisticated than older methods, but it is hardly more efficacious. Similarly, psychological methods involving disappointed hopes, promises, the hard and the soft man, were already well-known in ancient days, and widely used. Drugs, admittedly, constitute a new departure, but their efficacy too has been much exaggerated.

We do know that American servicemen captured in Viet Nam or in Korea, and brain-washed with the use of the best available techniques, did not for the most part show any lasting conversions as far as attitudes and beliefs were concerned. While under torture, they behaved as their captors wanted them to behave, but this is only to be expected, and does not constitute any great improvement on older techniques. On the whole, I do not believe that there is such a thing as "brain-washing", with all the far-reaching effects claimed for it. This is a personal belief, in the absence of access to such experiments as may have been carried out by governments and their agencies; but I would be very surprised if psychological techniques could really be found to live up to the exaggerated fears (and hopes) engendered by the prospects of a "Big-Brother" psychology.

The Hitler régime did succeed in persuading large numbers of Germans in the Third Reich that Nazism was "a good thing" for Germany; but then, to be sure, up to a point Hitler was also successful in the 1933–39 period in re-establishing Germany as a European power, in reducing unemployment, and in raising the standard of living of the majority of his subjects. In other words, it was not exactly irrational for many Germans to believe that the Hitler régime constituted for them personally an improvement on the Weimar Republic, although of course for Jews, Socialists, religious objectors, all consigned to concentration camps, this was obviously not true. A successful dictator produces living conditions for his subjects which are relatively favourable, and this on a simple pragmatic-rational basis ensures their docility. It is when things go wrong that the full apparatus of terror has to be brought into action, as in Stalinist Russia; and then people are not at all "manipulated" in any proper meaning of the term; they are simply cowed into obedience. Manipulation, even by constant lying, is a much more difficult procedure, and it is one which in the long run has not been found to be successful. The age-old yearning of man to be free is not to be suppressed so readily, and must be assumed to have a strong genetic basis as well. Many people resent the importance assigned to genetic factors because it makes egalitarianism more difficult to introduce; they should surely welcome it, in my view, as a libertarian factor, serving to reduce the dangers of totalitarian unanimity.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, those who would want to manipulate human behaviour by manipulating its genetic basis. Ever since Sir Francis Galton introduced the principles of eugenics, it has been the hope of many that one could, by inducing certain types of people to have more children than others, alter "the genetic balance of the population." At first sight it may seem reasonable to say that if only the brighter members of the population had more children than the duller ones, then gradually our gene pool for intelligence would improve, and the whole population would become more and more intelligent. I will not discuss here the ethics of such proposals. Clearly, if force is not used in making people mate along these lines, and if only rewards are used, it is possible to argue that basic ethical principles are not being violated. However, it is very difficult to envisage a society all, or most, of whose members are very high in intelligence. Who would carry out those jobs which require little intelligence and which would not be acceptable or tolerable or manageable to people with an IQ of 120 and over? After all, society needs coal miners, fishermen, agricultural labourers, dustmen, waiters and many other groups of people who carry out worthy and indispensable jobs which do not require a great deal of intelligence; they are still essential for the survival of society—just as much, and perhaps even more so, than are physicists,

[1] See, *The Biological Basis of Ideology*, ed. H. J. Eysenck and Glenn Wilson (MTP Press, 1978).

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chemists, and lawyers. It will need a lot of thinking before we should contemplate upsetting the balance of nature along these lines, although of course eugenicists' proposals for "breeding out" various types of diseases, social evils like alcoholism and neurosis, might be more acceptable, though even here many have expressed serious ethical doubts.

WHAT ABOUT B. F. SKINNER and the principles of "behaviour modification"? A great deal of opposition has been voiced, particularly in the United States, against the application of psychological principles to the modification of conduct and behaviour. Are these objections justified?

Let us look first of all at what is sometimes called "Behaviour Therapy", i.e. the application of the principles of Pavlovian conditioning and extinction to neurotic disorders of one kind or another. Here there is no doubt that considerable success has been achieved by using these methods in the treatment of phobias, anxieties, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and so forth—a success very much greater than that attending psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, and other similar techniques, which have never been found to be more successful than the simple passage of time, i.e. no treatment at all. I find it difficult to see any objections to such treatment, which is undertaken at the express wish of the patient, can be terminated at any moment by the patient, and sets certain aims for the treatment which are agreed upon with the patient. It is sometimes suggested that the method of treatment used, which is behaviouristic, in some way "dehumanises" the patient; but I also find it difficult to see any point in this argument. It is his neurotic disorder which "dehumanises" the patient; the treatment simply removes the symptoms about which he expresses concern, and sets him free to pursue a course of action more congenial to him.

Skinner's "behaviour modification" is rather different, in that it sets out to deal with behaviours which are in some way undesirable from a social point of view, but about which the individual expresses no personal concern. To take a simple and concrete example: a school teacher may find that his class is so unruly that he cannot properly carry out his teaching function. What would the Skinnerian advise? He would say that even in an unruly class the pupils sometimes are quiet and attend to their work, and that this should be encouraged by rewarding them each time they behave in this manner, i.e. by sweets, cigarettes, or some other kind of reward they themselves desire. Usually tokens are given, which can then be exchanged for some kind of desirable object. Does the method work? The answer is that it works very well, and a class can be pacified in a relatively short period of time. Again, I will not deal with the ethics of the situation; some people say that this constitutes "simple bribery", and that bribery is not a proper basis on which to base an improvement in human behaviour. I want rather to mention two difficulties which are often associated with Skinnerian conditioning of this kind.

The first relates to the need to continue the method of treatment indefinitely. The class may be pacified by this species of reinforcement rewards but it will not continue to be pacified if the bribery stops. In other words, there is little extension to behaviour outside the conditioning situation, and it is really this extension that one should be aiming for.

But this is not the only difficulty; another one, which was observed in actual practice, is related to it, but somewhat independent. In one dramatic experiment described, the experimenters wanted to have a baseline against which to assess the success of their treatment. Consequently, they applied the special treatment during morning school sessions, but not during afternoon sessions. The pupils, keen on the rewards they received in the morning, naturally wanted to extend the experimental sessions into the afternoon as well. As a consequence they became so noisy, mischievous, and generally unbearable in the afternoon session that the experimenter had to give in and extend his "behaviour modification" techniques to the afternoon also. In other words, the children manipulated the experimenters, rather than the other way about, and proved to be better "behaviour modifiers" than the psychologists!

This illustrates a constant danger in this kind of work. It is well-portrayed in a famous cartoon, showing a rat in a Skinner box saying to another rat: "*I've got my psychologist beautifully conditioned now—every time I push the lever, he gives me some food.* . . ." The question of who-manipulates-whom is here raised in a humorous form, but it is a very serious one, and one which in social situations (i.e., removed from the laboratory) is very difficult to resolve. It bedevils all attempts to use "behaviour modification" in industry, in education, and in prisons.

Here certain ethical principles are obviously involved; but, in my view, much of the hullabaloo that attended the introduction of so-called "psychological methods" into prisons was misdirected. Prison officers who were not themselves psychologists, and who had no knowledge of psychological principles and methods, introduced all sorts of cruel and inhumane practices into their dealings with prisoners (including electro-shock, torture and the like), under the name of "behaviour modification." All this had nothing whatsoever to do with Skinnerian principles or genuine behaviour modification; it was little else but an extension of ancient practices of rule-by-terror using modern methods of punishment. It needs only to be explained that Skinner has always been explicit that the only way his behaviour modification could work was by using positive reinforcements (i.e. rewards), and that the use of punishment of any kind was "contra-indicated." The popular press, unfortunately, has never understood or shown any interest in the scientific basis of conditioning, and hence has contributed to these widespread and grievous misunderstandings.

IN GENERAL, psychology can, for better or worse, certainly make a contribution to social efforts to manipulate other people. A very simple example is the efforts people sometimes make to get their dogs to come to them when they are called. Too often what happens is that the dog does not respond, and the owner gets annoyed. When the dog finally returns, he is beaten by the owner, thus associating punishment with obeying the call to come back. As an obvious psychological consequence of this negative conditioning, the dog will be even more reluctant the next time to come to the owner when he calls! What should be done, of course, is to associate rewards with obedience, so that when the dog does eventually come to the owner he should swallow his anger and pat the dog on the head and give him a piece of sausage. This simple tale illustrates the principles of Skinnerian behaviour modification; and ample evidence suggests that it works equally well with humans. There is nothing very subtle in this, and nothing very Machiavellian. Equally, the principles have definite limitations, and would normally be powerless if pitted

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against genetic predispositions or factors of self-interest in the person whom we are trying to influence, control, help or manipulate.

At the moment psychology can make a relatively small contribution to such manipulation, but nothing that could be regarded as socially dangerous, or ethically objectionable. Films like *Clockwork Orange*, crudely based on Anthony Burgess's famous novel, maliciously misinterpreted the message, and gave the impression that psychologists are much more powerful and malevolent than in actual fact they are. Most procedures of manipulation, such as those involved in Behaviour Therapy, only work if the person who is being manipulated—controlled, influenced, helped—agrees with the aims of the manipulation; if he is opposed, then none of these methods is likely to work.

This is probably just as well; however well-meaning psychologists might be, if their methods could be generalised to work even when the recipient was unwilling, it is very easy indeed to imagine—as Orwell did—how evil politicians, Big Brothers and others, would use them for their own ends. The *danger* of such methods being discovered is omnipresent; but at the moment they do not exist. Manipulation of others is still a difficult and hazardous business, not likely to be successful unless totally supported by direct and unremitting applications of violence and terror; let us thank God, or be generally grateful, that this is indeed so.

Coda

(Thelonious Monk, d. 17 February 1982)

Goat-bearded, crazy-hatted old wrong-noter:
Your half-tones filled the gaps of adolescence,
When all brave young aficionados claimed
To know what you were up to: shameless bluff,
Until one day we woke to find it true.

Thus now hands, aimless on a keyboard, fall
Into "Round Midnight"—haunted, audible
Through the sizzling of a Riverside EP
Those twenty years ago, the sheet music
Ordered from a baffled small-town shop:

Both still possessed, with later images
Of one March night in London, '65,
Prancing before a South Bank audience.
Within the pauses and abrasive chords,
Misterioso—hermit or buffoon?

No need to choose. I couldn't understand
Then how defences crowd about the self;
How, hedged around with paradox, we lose
The centre we defend; so couldn't know
Why you fragmented sentimental songs,

Invented notes for dislocated moods,
Evaded easy treasonable concord.
I'd hope but daren't believe at last you rest,
Beyond our life's perverse cacophony,
If not in peace, at least in harmony.

Neil Powell

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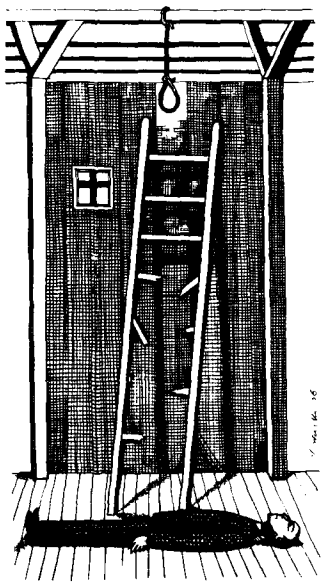
EAST & WEST

The Future of "Solidarity"

From a Polish Prison

By Adam Michnik



MY DEAR—. Four years ago, just before the Papal visit, I was again trapped. I happened to be paying a visit to a friend from the independent publishing House *Nowa*, when the police came to search for leaflets. They didn't find any, but they found us and they took us in triumph to the Mostowski Palace. But that time they held me for no more than 24 hours, instead of the sacramental 48. On the morning of the arrival of John Paul II in Warsaw I was already a free man—a chivalrous gesture of Gierek's police to an undisguised adversary of theirs. This was to be a one-day truce. Well, it was. . . .

What a great injection of strength it was—how happy we were! No one, whatever his views, had any doubt that it was good that he had come, that he would be with us for ten days, enriching us with openly spoken words of truth and fervent prayer. This time, I am told, some people have doubts. Some of my friends fear that the visit may be seen as a sign of acceptance of the dictatorship imposed on us in the night 12–13 December 1981. I don't share those fears. The Pope's visit to Guatemala did not mean approval of the right-wing dictatorship there, nor was the visit to Nicaragua a gesture of support for dictators who mouth a leftist phraseology. Neither will it signify approval for the dictatorship in Poland. No one will be taken in by the protocol meeting with our generals and political secretaries—everyone knows that our great countryman does not come to see *them*.

The episcopate is being criticised for their allegedly too-conciliatory attitude. Here again I beg to differ. The general line of the Polish Bishops, notwithstanding an occasional clumsy form of words, is, to my mind, clear and consistent: no political programmes, no part for the Church in the political game, but a defence of human dignity and concern for the injured and the persecuted. I can't quite see how one can want "separation of Church and State" and at the same time expect the Church to be engaged in *par excellence* political opposition. . . . The Church we need is precisely a Church that preaches the Gospel, not political clericalism, one which stands for basic Christian principles of communal life, not for specific political-institutional solutions. Such a Church is what we all need, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. It is the greatest strength of Poles, though it is not political strength. And this Church stands today in need of another Papal visit, just as the visit is needed by Poles who declare their *Non possumus* from the social margin, from the underground, and from prisons.

COULD THE VISIT harm underground *Solidarity*? I find it difficult to write on the underground, for here I am least well informed and most cut off from the dialectics of authentic controversies. In so far, however, as the Minister of the Interior, General Kiszczak, may be considered a reliable source, I must say that on reading his speeches I get the impression that we have to do with an underground movement on a scale without precedent in the history of Communist states. . . . According to General Kiszczak the underground has chosen the strategy of a "long march" of creating structures of civic life which are independent of the authorities, and of utilising all forms of resistance against the totalitarian claims of Generals and Secretaries. This kind of conspiracy of deeds and consciences cannot be smashed by means of political sneaks, prisons, trials and provocations, though General Kiszczak still seems to put his trust in them. . . .

The May Day demonstrations have revealed the power of the underground and the state of the public mind. They have shown that the strategy of the underground leadership is well thought out, rational and effective. If I could say something to one of the underground leaders, Bujak, I would say: "Zbyszek, keep it up."

The appeal of Walesa and other leaders, not only of *Solidarity* but also of the branch and autonomous unions, has exposed the utter failure of the Government-sponsored unions, and crowned, as it were, the stand of millions of workers who boycott this favourite creation of Deputy Premier Rakowski. It has also shown PRON to be a stillborn baby of martial law. Finally, Walesa's appeal has revealed the true intentions of the authorities when they declared, with the savage pen of an official commentator (Major Gornicki), that they were not interested in any form of (social) accord.

Can, then, the Papal visit change anything in the Polish equation? Can it resolve the political crisis? Can it bring about an accord with society which so many people seem to expect? I don't think so. This would be unrealistic. But the visit will be a spectacular demonstration of the Polish desire for freedom, an affirmation of the chosen form of Polish resistance, which rejects violence, and an exposure of the moral bankruptcy of the ruling team. . . . I think that the Papal message will safeguard the resistance movement against the temptation to have recourse to violence. But it will not save Poland from the impact of official violence, the logical outcome of the functioning of the *Nomenklatura*, of its implicit weaknesses and internal conflicts.

ADAM MICHNIK *has been imprisoned since 1981. This is a shortened version of an article written in Mokotow prison in Warsaw where the 36-year-old historian, together with three other members of the self-dissolved Workers' Defence Committee* (KOR), *awaits trial on the charge of "planning to overthrow the sociopolitical system by force." Information as to how the interview which follows was obtained cannot, for obvious reasons, be revealed.*

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LET ME GO BACK for a moment to the events of 18 months ago. All interpretations of that December night, my own included, were focused on the structural conflict of the apparatus of power with *Solidarity*. We saw the coup as a desperate act of self-defence of totalitarian power against an organised society that was reclaiming its right to be a free agent. It was that, indeed, but it was something more beside. The ruling team was also threatened by a coup organised by Party hard-liners. It was to overthrow Jaruzelski, as it had earlier overthrown Stanislaw Kania, at the next plenary meeting of the Central Committee. And there are many signs that the hard-liners had the full blessing of the Soviet leaders, who were quite willing to use their troops to "come to the aid of Poland in need." Things turned out differently. Jaruzelski preferred the fate of a Kadar (or a kind of red Pinochet), to that of a Nagy or a Maleter; to follow in Husak's footsteps rather than Dubcek's.

Thus the team which in February 1981 had declared its will to compromise and to help to foster "a socialism in partnership" took upon itself the role of suppressor of Polish aspirations. In talks with *Solidarity* the role of the charming Minister Ciosek was taken over by the police investigator. . . .

From the very first days of martial law these two characteristics of official policy were equally in evidence: suppression of social resistance and eliminating hard-liners from the seats of power. Jaruzelski immediately announced that the process of "renewal" would be continued, that all restrictions were merely temporary, and promised the workers the reactivation of *Solidarity*. That was the carrot. There was also the stick in the form of thousands of internees, tanks in the streets, a campaign of vicious slanders, and breaking the protest strikes by force.

The latter was effective quite quickly, and at a relatively low cost. The reason for this was the fact that *Solidarity* was utterly unprepared for this kind of struggle, contrary to the idiotic lies that *Solidarity* was preparing "a blood-bath for Communists." Another even more important reason was the conviction that a continuation of resistance "by force" at the moment served no useful purpose. The generals were quite surprised—they expected stiffer resistance in the first few days. They counted on a "headlong clash" with *Solidarity*, and that crushing resistance by force would be the decisive factor, as it had been in Hungary in 1956. Instead, something else happened. People quite quickly shook off the trauma. Illegal structures began to emerge. Information sheets and leaflets began to appear. And an underground leadership of *Solidarity* was set up.

Originally, the liquidation of *Solidarity* was not envisaged at all. The aim was to purge it of "counter-revolutionary extremists"—in other words, quite normal people—and impose the leading role of the PUWP on the Union, reform its structures and install party agents. *Solidarity* was to do all this by its own hands. A number of corruptible careerists were to serve as the broom, and Lech Walesa was to guarantee their credibility. Walesa, whom they courted all the time, was to

"Poland is Not Yet Lost . . ."

BY ALL THE SCIENTIFIC HISTORICAL LAWS of Marxism-Leninism what happened in Poland in 1980–81 was impossible. The first genuine workers' revolution in history developed under the sign of the cross against a "Workers' State"! *Solidarity* blew a hole the size of Poland through the central claims of Communist ideology: the impossible happened.

This is surely one reason why the Soviet Party attaches such importance to the KOR trial. It is urgently necessary for the Party itself, in the Soviet Union and in other Soviet bloc countries, to have some half-way plausible ideological explanation of what happened in Poland. The myth that KOR "hijacked" the mass movement, that it was to the Polish revolution what the Bolsheviks were to the Russian revolution, will provide this ideological fig-leaf.

In fact, while it can be argued that *before* August 1980 KOR did play the role of the Leninist vanguard, raising the political consciousness of small groups of workers in key industrial centres, *after* August 1980 its role was quite different. Far from injecting radical utopian perspectives into the mass movement, far from nourishing those fantastic illusions which had accompanied previous European revolutions, the intellectuals who are now to be made scapegoats did all they could to puncture the utopian illusions which undoubtedly surfaced among the young workers who led *Solidarity* (especially at the regional and large factory levels). It was precisely the Kurons and Litynskis who constantly pointed to the limits of the possible. But because *Nicht sein kann was nicht sein darf*, the truth will be turned on its head to accord with the ideological fiction.

FROM the inadequate historical altitude of one year it is naturally hard to describe the lasting transformation of consciousness wrought by *Solidarity*. One element of this transformation was the mass reaffirmation of certain traditional, European, primary values. For 16 months we in "the West" were privileged to watch the Poles struggling with extraordinary courage, dignity and self-restraint, for values which we could hardly (thought some did) fail to recognize as our own—individual freedom, democratic government, the rule of law—values born from the common culture of old Europe. At a time when many young people in the West seemed to doubt the primacy of these values, in the face of economic recession and the threat of nuclear war, young Polish workers, who had lived all their lives under communism, were daubing on a crane in the Lenin Shipyard the words "*Man is born and lives free.*" It was Polish *schoolchildren* (in Gdansk) who chose as the motto of their unofficial journal: "*Dangerous freedom is dearer to me than safe bondage.*"

Now there is a somewhat mysterious simultaneity in the post-War histories of "East" and "West." The years of crisis in the East, 1956, 1968, 1980–81, have been years of crisis—or at least of startling new developments—in the West as well. In the case of those two burgeoning social movements of 1980–81, *Solidarity* and the Peace Movement, it was hard to avoid the impression that the old Europe (speaking through *Solidarity*) had been called in to redress the balance of the new.

Timothy Garton Ash

WE are facing an entirely new situation. For the first time the apparatus of Communist power was compelled to wage war—under this very name—against its own society. The ideological side of communism has long ago stopped being a target even for jokes; it has fallen apart to such an extent that even the rulers are hard put to employ it. The Party has been devastated and demoralized, and the military obviously does not feel like returning to barracks and relinquishing the power it enjoys.

Direct military dictatorship has never been imposed in a communist country, and its very necessity has demonstrated one of the most painful weaknesses of Sovietism: the crisis of legitimacy. According to doctrine, the Communist Party rules because it embodies society's interests and aspirations, of which, being mentally retarded, society is unaware; the justification for Party despotism is its ideology. The army is supposed to be an organ of the same Party,

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signify continuity with August 1980, legitimise the authorities' intentions in the eyes of public opinion at home and abroad, i.e. serve as a living proof that the bastard was actually a legitimate child of *Solidarity*.

The underground had to counter this scenario with an alternative idea: how to square the Polish circle? The vision began to take shape in discussions and controversies in which reality had to be the final arbiter. The mass membership of the Union was divided—it could hardly be otherwise. Some were arguing for the need of some sort of compromise at any price, invoking the Soviet threat, the demise of the economy, and the position of the Primate of Poland. Others saw rather the need to force a quick general solution, a compromise extorted by massive strikes. . . . Now, in limited retrospect, it is clear that the underground leaders chose the most sensible path: they rejected both capitulation to the offers of Rakowski and a risky total confrontation, and limited themselves to fostering a sophisticated resistance movement. Instead of constructing a centralised underground organisation they opted for encouraging civil action in many different forms. Apart from organising spectacular mass demonstrations they devoted much attention to the unspectacular work of organising resistance in factories, universities, and the like. I can only express my unbounded admiration for their achievements over these eighteen months. They had behind them the determined stand of the internal leaders of *Solidarity*—above all, of Lech Walesa. One could say that never was so much owed to one man.

THE DEMONSTRATIONS of May and August 1982 put paid to the hopes of the régime for remodelling or splitting *Solidarity*. The de-legalisation of *Solidarity* in October was an open admission of defeat. The possibility of political action of the power apparatus was still equal to zero. All the same, the moment of de-legalisation was dangerous to *Solidarity*. The authorities actually wanted a forceful confrontation. The underground showed itself to be exceedingly prudent. The strike in the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk and the great demonstrations in Nowa Huta served as a useful symbol—the workers showed that they do not accept Government decisions backed by the authority of security troops. The fact that the underground managed to avoid a confrontation towards the end of 1982 was, to my mind, a great tactical success.

Many observers think that the call for a general strike on 10 November was a mistake. I disagree. If it was a mistake, it was one that was unavoidable. The mass membership of its radical wing would never have forgiven the leaders had they renounced this weapon entirely. Nothing but experience could have convinced the radicals that a general strike is an instrument that has to be used with the utmost caution.

I think that, at the time, the workers could approve nothing less than a call for "a strike until victory", even though such a call would be unrealistic, not least for fear of a Soviet intervention. But an equally disastrous result of a failed general strike in November would have been a collapse of the underground structures. The sudden release of Lech Walesa, which coincided with the death of Brezhnev, increased the sense of

whereby it protects socialist democracy from imperialist assaults. Once the army comes to power and the club commands the hand, where is the source of legitimacy? It would appear that a new brand of scientific Marxism-Leninism is needed to cope with the situation.

IT IS A SETBACK, *to be sure, but it should be seen in its historical perspective, as a very important stage in the process of the degradation and decomposition of Sovietism. Sovietism will never be the same again. No uplifting slogans can hide its mortal disease. In coming years, Sovietism is going to face a choice which is crucial not only to its own future, but to the destiny of mankind as a whole: either it will try to escape from its own hopeless stagnation into further imperialist expansion, thereby leading the world towards the unspeakable horrors of global war, or it will concentrate on internal economic reconstruction, which clearly cannot be carried out without far-reaching political reform.*

No doubt, the choice is theirs, but it can be influenced by the West.

Leszek Kolakowski

THE NOTION OF THE HUMAN **escapes definition, but becomes concrete when the behaviour of an individual provides an example. A young boy arrested for carrying leaflets protesting against "the state of war" is given a choice: he will get a five-year prison sentence unless he signs a declaration of loyalty that allows him to go home. He does not sign. In the eyes of the security police officer who has given him the choice, the act of refusal is absurd, since the world operates in such a way that everything is decided by brute force and—says the officer—it is on our side; we are its representatives.**

This collision between the anonymous determinism represented by the officer and the freedom of the lonely prisoner contains the whole existential problem. The act of refusal is not based on anything, does not emerge from any possible calculation. All arguments oppose it, except this voice from inside that forbids surrendering under pressure from victorious violence.

AND IT IS TRUE **that our knowledge is dangerous. For it signifies the end of rhetoric so dear to 20th-century intellectuals and reaches into that which has not yet been named but which emerges as a threat to human essence itself. It is indeed tempting to believe that God's silence means that history repeats biblical archetypes, so that man can get rid of the hubris of progress, so that he can discover his isolation in the face of the state and read again what the Bible says of Egypt, Babylon and Rome.**

Yet man's ridiculous powerlessness is again and again denied by his acts of loyalty to himself in spite of everything, for we feel that these acts are integral to the nature of the development of the world, although nobody knows how much time will pass before they bear fruit. Events like the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, the Prague Spring of 1968, *Solidarity* in Poland, were important attempts to escape the power of lies and retrieve human dignity, accomplished by men who were believed to be too crushed to be able to react.

Each of these successive movements managed to reach greater depths, to involve an increasingly massive number of workers. Thus the totalitarian state nourishes an enemy in its breast, an avenger of those it degrades. It is an illusion to hope that the unsteady balance that has been established in the monarchies of Central and Western Europe and that characterizes democracies—the balance between the will of the rulers and the pressure exerted by the ruled—can be achieved under this régime.

The past year in Poland has clearly demonstrated the only acceptable form of relationship there between the governing minority and the governed majority.

In the end, all that is left of the glorious dreams of ending the alienation and the exploitation of man by man is one message, one demand which is addressed to the human race: man must not surrender.

Czeslaw Milosz

From "Poland under Jaruzelski", the two special issues of SURVEY *Magazine (London), edited by Leopold Labedz.*

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disorientation. At that time the authorities held a considerable trump card in their hands. I was already here in the Mokotow prison when I heard of the offer which Walesa was believed to have made to the authorities. He was said to be ready to "write off *Solidarity*" in exchange for permission to organise another union on a denominational basis. If that was indeed the case, the authorities committed a capital blunder. Public opinion was in a state of confusion. The underground (TKK) had declared its readiness to dissolve itself, should Walesa demand it. Negotiations conducted by Walesa would have carried the mark of credibility and would have spelled the death of underground *Solidarity*. Any compromise, with an amnesty on top of it, would have meant the end of underground *Solidarity*.

But the authorities were still full of their November success. Minister Urban had already declared total victory and the death of *Solidarity*. Negotiations were out. . . . The next few months were to show how illusory that victory was. Underground *Solidarity*, having survived the winter, and having spelt out a long-term strategy in terms of years, has become a permanent element of Polish reality.

ANOTHER AIM OF MARTIAL LAW STRATEGY was to split the workers from the intelligentsia. Striking workers received heavy sentences; the intellectuals were wooed. Rakowski kept a relatively liberal course in cultural policy; some books by *émigré* and interned writers were published; literary censorship was relatively mild. But the wooing was ignored. After a year of threats and advances, not only were the independent Students' Union (NZS) and the Journalists' Union (SDP) dissolved; but the Actors' Union (ZASP) was de-legalised in revenge for the boycott of television which the authorities were unable to break. The writers and filmmakers are still keeping up their resistance. . . . All these prominent people serve as an example of moral fibre, and are a source of strength for the rest of society. Even the rulers are aware of this—hence their increased nervousness and more and more frequent reprisals.

Rakowski's thinking seems to be dominated by the pattern of opposition in the Gierek era, which was limited to a few dozen writers or other "dissident" intellectuals. But since August 1980 the picture has been quite different. Prominent in the public eye are workers, strike leaders, activists who have their moral power-base in the factories. Independent political thought was formulated not in the Writers' Union, the Journalists' Union, or in the universities, but in great enterprises and by the National Commission of *Solidarity*. The press—which played such a vital role at the time of the "Polish October" or the "Prague Spring"—this time trailed behind events. This Rakowski was unable to understand; he kept seeing "intellectual manipulators" behind the backs of the workers' leaders. He sees them still. . . .

The intellectuals resist official lures not because they are indulging in a private feud with the Government, but because they value their own good sense and dignity. Also the resistance of the young generation provides the strongest possible argument that the policies of the Government have no future. It is the young who react most vividly against injustice; they are the most sensitive, most courageous, and most uncompromising part of society.

The political isolation of the apparatus of power is deepened by the economic débâcle, with no end to it in sight. Prospects of repaying the debts are nil, while indebtedness to the Soviet Union increases all the time. Economic growth is visible only in official statistics. Workers' self-management is dead or in the process of being killed, and economic reforms exist only on paper. A crash of agricultural production is still to come, but further price-increases for bread and meat have already been announced.

Consider three yardsticks of the achievements of the eighteen months' rule of martial law: political stabilisation, economic growth, and overcoming the international blockade. On all three counts the strategy adopted on 13 December 1981 has ended in defeat. There has never been a Communist government of Poland so despised the world over. In response the Government tries to revive the German bogey. Abuse is being hurled at the United States with an intensity unparalleled since the Korean War, a development that has effectively enhanced the popularity of President Reagan with the Poles. Personally, I do not think that linking the methods of *Solidarity* with American policy makes much sense, just as I have never believed that the social movements in Latin America are merely the result of Soviet inspiration. The new American policy is due to the collapse of *détente*. As early as the late 1970s it was becoming clear that *détente* did not work. Events in Iran and the invasion of Afghanistan convinced American opinion that the Soviet Union, without attacking the Americans directly, was undermining their position elsewhere. . . .

MOSCOW IS FAR FROM PLEASED with the situation in Poland. In the Polish Party there emerged, in the period between August 1980 and December 1981, a number of groups which were equally dissatisfied with the Polish leadership. They are popularly refered to as "concrete" (hard-liners). The best known were the Katowice Party Forum, the Patriotic Association "Grunwald", and the weekly *Rzeczywistosc* (*Reality*). They had their sponsors at the highest level in the persons of Stefan Olszowski, Tadeusz Grabski, Andrzej Zabinski and Stanislaw Kociolek. They were to serve as a counterweight to the so-called "horizontal structures" in the Party, which demanded (internal) democratisation.

The men of "concrete" drew their inspiration from the darkest periods in the history of the Polish Workers' Party, the PUWP. The Katowice Forum used the language of the Stalinist faction of 1956 (Natolin); and "Grunwald" and *Rzeczywistosc*

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enriched the ideology with an anti-Semitism rooted in the Party since 1968. All their public statements echoed critical remarks that kept appearing in the Soviet press and in that of other "fraternal Parties." After the famous letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU of June 1981, the "men of concrete" attempted a formal *coup d'état*. At the plenum of the Polish Central Committee, Tadeusz Grabski demanded the resignation of First Secretary Stanislaw Kania. With particular fury they attacked Rakowski, though they did not dare to attack Jaruzelski. Soon, however, the "concrete" was also paralysed by the introduction of martial law; and the Kremlin, after some hesitation, gave Jaruzelski its blessing. A purge of the Party began. However, it did not affect only the "horizontal structures" and Party liberals at every level, including the provincial secretaries in Gdansk and Poznan (Fiszbach and Skrzypczak). The purge affected also the men of "concrete." Zabinski was ousted from Katowice and Kociolek from Warsaw. Finally, in the summer of 1982, Olszowski had to quit his job as Party Secretary responsible for propaganda. Key positions were taken over by the military—in the Party and also in the administration. The army became the guarantor of order.

However, in the eyes of the "hard-liners" martial law was no more than an innocent picnic. Thousands of detainees were evidence of a "pernicious liberalism"; the declared intention to continue a policy of reforms amounted to "dangerous revisionism"; talks with the Episcopate smacked of "rightist opportunism" and capitulation to clericalism. They dreamt of a régime *à la* Dzierzynski, a cultural policy *à la* Zhdanov, indeed the ideological clarity of a Joseph Stalin. . . .

At the October Plenum of the CC in 1982, Kociolek attacked the leadership at the most sensitive point: he charged it with ignoring economic cooperation with the Soviet Union. "No plan is possible", said Kociolek, who has since become Ambassador in Moscow, "without prior agreement with our main partner on what should be the material foundations of economic stabilisation." There is little doubt that what Kociolek was saying had been consulted in advance with Moscow, and that it was, in fact, Moscow talking. No one, not even Jaruzelski, dared to contradict Kociolek. His "concrete" platform was prudently overlooked. For the hard-liners the speech was an important signal. Soon Tadeusz Grabski, exiled to a commercial post in East Berlin, was to formulate his famous letter, criticising the inefficiency and inconsistency of official policy. The "real" Communists took courage and became very active. . . .

LET ME GO A LITTLE FURTHER back in time. The purpose of the Jaruzelski-Rakowski team, which took in hand the reins of government in February of 1981, was twofold: Jaruzelski was to represent the power of the new State leadership, and Rakowski its will to come to an agreement with society. He had just criticised, in a much-quoted article in

Schooldays (Gdansk)

How do you manage with the children?

DANUTA WALESA: **I have terrible trouble. They are quite reckless. . . . I have the most difficult time with Slawek, who is in the third form. He and his schoolmates got together some gangs. They beat up a boy who said that his father was a member of the Party. It's terrible that such things can happen. But just try and explain to a ten-year-old boy that he shouldn't pick fights with such types, when he sees the [ZOMO] men walking the streets with truncheons. Why are they carrying these hefty sticks? To beat people up, of course. The teachers found out what my boy did and they said that he ought to be expelled from the school. They are obviously not too concerned about his education. The easiest thing would be to expel him. There are more boys like mine in his class, a whole crowd of them. Their parents are also resisting; we are more numerous than they are.**

—So these young boys are already preparing for the struggle?

D.W.: **Third formers! They have their own membership cards, safe conducts, passwords and slogans. "The Crow will not overpower the Eagle!" It's terrible.**

From the underground publication
GDANSK: THE STATE OF WAR *(16 March 1982)*

THE WAR FOUND US *in our beds. A neighbour from upstairs woke us up: "It's war! Jaruzelski's gone mad. Look out of the window." We jumped up on the window-sill. Only one of our windows looks out on to the street. We looked over to the crossroads and saw tanks and cars there. There were patrols everywhere. It wasn't even clear whether they were military or police patrols.*

Daddy swore and said: "They've gone mad, if it really is war." The neighbour assured him: "I tell you it is war. The Moscow whore has done what she was paid to do."

We got dressed quickly and went out into the street. On the walls were big announcements about the introduction of martial law and capital punishment. The **Solidarity** *posters had been torn down or covered over with other posters saying:* ICE SPECTACULAR.

Daddy said to me: "Be quiet and don't talk. And don't get involved in any discussions at school."

Christmas was very sad, Mummy was crying. To cheer her up we got hold of two huge posters about the state of war [martial law]. We put them up in the kitchen. But Mummy started to cry even more. So I didn't know what else to do to cheer her up. Daddy said: "Leave her alone and put the posters away. They may come here."

Just after Christmas I went back to school. At break the boys in my class beat me up. "That's for **Solidarity**, *you scum!" they shouted. In our class they are mostly policemen's children. That's why they beat me up. The other children were scared to come to my defence. Even the teacher was afraid.*

The second lesson was games and sports. Everyone played together—as if nothing had happened.

Pawel, aged 13

OUR TEACHER SAID **that now, in the war, the children of the militiamen and the soldiers are the most miserable because their fathers are on active service for Poland. And I told her that my uncle's children are the most miserable because my uncle is in prison in Ilawa. My teacher began to shout and told me to shut up or else I would also go to prison. And she added that** *Solidarity* **people must be exterminated like ticks.**

Our teacher is a Party secretary. Nobody loves her or even likes her. In our class it happens that everyone's parents are in *Solidarity*. **It was horrible to hear our teacher's threats, but then she just stopped shouting and burst into tears.**

Janek, aged 12

WEZWANIE *(May–July 1982)*

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Polityka, the poor negotiating skills of Premier Penkowski. Rakowski obviously had the magic formula of a "social accord" that would make up for the unsympathetic stand of the Party apparatus and its lack of support from Moscow. And Rakowski continued in this role after 13 December. It was probably he who raised Jerzy Urban, his ex-employee in the weekly *Polityka*—to the function of Government spokesman with ministerial rank.

However, when successive social-accord formulas failed one after another, some people spurning the stick and others the carrot, Rakowski's position became increasingly difficult. Without any popular support and under constant attack from the hard-liners, Rakowski owed his position exclusively to his friendship with Jaruzelski. Then, just before the announced date of the ideological plenum of the Central Committee, there appeared in the Soviet *New Times* magazine a frontal attack on *Polityka*, that is, on Rakowski. But by the same token it was an attack on the policies of the Polish Government. Seldom do the Soviet comrades intervene so openly—only when they find that private pressures fail to produce the desired result.

Warsaw's reaction was significant. The press failed to mention the article in *New Times*, and only *Polityka* printed a concise and biting retort. Such disregard for the Soviet press was without precedent, even in the *Solidarity* era. Rakowski had apparently decided that only a defiant posture could save him. The ideological plenum was postponed until September, and the May plenum devoted itself merely to a periodical survey of the situation in the country. The report of the *Politburo* was delivered by Czyrek (not by Jaruzelski, not even by Barcikowski). It spoke optimistically of the crisis being overcome and the underground being increasingly isolated. A fight on two fronts was announced: against revisionism and dogmatism alike. Disruptive factionalism within the Party was condemned. At the same time the Soviet press was writing about an "American-sponsored counter-revolution in Poland". . . .

There is in today's world a great need to seek ways to peace and mutual agreement. It may well be that one of these ways leads through Poland. Is agreement in Poland possible? Today it is not, and it will remain impossible until the ruling Communists give way before the Polish will to be a free agent. Will that be possible in the future? I don't know. But I know that it will be necessary—for Poland, and for the world. Dialogue requires the existence of partners. *Solidarity*, pushed into the underground, calumnied and persecuted, is paying a high price to keep the chance of a dialogue alive. I only wish the peace campaigners in the West took this dimension of *Solidarity*'s actions into account, for it is certainly not unthinkable that a spectacular peaceful solution in Poland will become the starting-point for the resolution of international tensions; that it will become a source of strength and hope for all who prefer negotiations, however difficult and protracted, to "dialogue" by means of truncheons and tear-gas, tanks and guns, and in the end with missiles of tactical, medium, and strategic range.

With this hope in my heart I look forward to the visit of Pope John Paul II to Poland. For if it is true what Goethe said—that "history is a *mélange* of blunders and violence", this apostle of peace and human rights has been doing all in his power to help people avoid blunders and renounce violence.

I MUST CLOSE this meditation. This night will bring, in a few hours' time, the last chance to get this text to the other, somewhat freer, side of the wall. I must hurry. . . .

So, to finish, here are a few words *pro domo sua*. I have been in prison for eighteen months now. First I was interned in Bialoleka,[1] then I was brought with other members of KOR here to Mokotow, on the charge of having engaged in preparations to overthrow the system of the Polish People's Republic by force—and to weaken its defences. Since February I have been studying the 40 bulky volumes of evidence. The Ministry of the Interior and the military prosecutors did not take much trouble to make the charge plausible. Our trial will be a rather incompetent copy of Stalinist trials, with their absurd evidence and the sentences prepared in advance. I have no illusions. I am sure to get several years at least. And for me there will be no amnesty. I shall spend a long time behind bars.

But I shall not ask for clemency. I did not join KOR and *Solidarity* to bend my knee to General Jaruzelski, but to ensure that my people should never again have to ask for anything on their bended knees.

Interview with Adam Michnik

YOU'VE *been sitting here in detention longer than* Solidarity *existed. How have you learned to cope?*

MICHNIK: The answer is always the same: work and faith in the sense of what I am doing. I read a lot and try to make use of the time to study. The news I get from the outside indicates that my incarceration has some sense, that it is a fragment of the *Solidarity* resistance movement; especially now, when the authorities put out a stream of lies about "progressive normalisation" and "national agreement", our incarceration is one more proof that it is not so.

—I understand that you try at all costs to avoid pathos, even if you should find yourself living in the shadow of those great words of the poet Zbigniew Herbert: "You have little time/You must bear witness/Be courageous when reason fails/Be courageous."

MICHNIK: The situation itself is full of pathos, so I don't need to be pathetic. I am guided by the simple instinct for self-preservation. I have known for many years that one must never make any bargains with the police, because it always ends badly. They only know how to lie—but they do it quite well. They are stupid, but unfortunately the people they question are sometimes even more stupid. That's why Herbert is right: the most important thing here is courage and care for one's honour. In any case, Herbert is perhaps the best writer for a time of humiliation, I think. More and more people refuse to enter into conversation with those gentlemen from the security service. You don't need the grand gesture. You don't need reason. Just a little courage.

—How did you and the others here react to the Pope's visit? It was to you that the Pope addressed his remarks in his first speech on Polish soil.

MICHNIK: Like everyone else in Poland—with great joy and hope. One of the results of the visit is that so many of us were let

[1] See, in ENCOUNTER (September–October 1982), the interview with Michnik, originally published in the *Bialoleka Courier*, the prisoners' illegal newspaper.

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out of jail. But there will be other results too—the long-term ones. An important thing happened here in prison: most of the prisoners began a hunger strike, to press their demands for, among other things, the status of political prisoners. The hunger strike was voluntary. No one put any pressure on anyone else (I, for instance, did not go on hunger strike). It was a highly significant moral act. I would very much like this struggle for political status to be noticed by the Episcopate. Many of the prisoners do not understand why the Bishops remain silent on this point. After all, it's not a question of politics but of elementary human dignity.

—The KOR *trial is something extraordinary . . . the authorities wanted to unmask you—and unmasked themselves. Hardly anyone made any depositions—and you have been wading through the documentation for the umpteenth month.*

MICHNIK: The prosecution even had a brainwave and tried to deny me that opportunity. That's one of their great ideas—I'll talk about the others during the trial. As a trial it's going to be grotesque. The authorities unmasked themselves not now but on 13 December 1981. Now they have only revealed their stupidity. General Jaruzelski had a super idea: to add a year's internment to our sentence. These gentlemen display great intellectual inventiveness when it comes to devising ways of keeping people locked up. A trial cannot compromise us, but may well compromise them. We very much want this trial to go ahead. The documentation is a mine of information, not so much about KOR as about its present supervisors. At the trial I will say what I have read here about "the sad engine-drivers of prison trains" (as Czeslaw Milosz would have put it). Jaruzelski believes in the discipline of the judges who will be sentencing us. But he should not believe in the discipline of the accused.

—But that is a luxury you have thanks to yourself—not thanks to Jaruzelski and Kiszczak [*Minister of the Interior*].

MICHNIK: Above all I have you to thank; we have to thank the *Solidarity* underground. You know, that radio broadcast for prisoners—that was something magnificent. It was like an injection of new strength. I did not suppose that words from *Solidarity* could penetrate here. But when they did, I realised how much had changed in Poland. No one has that feeling of isolation any more—and that is the authorities' greatest defeat.

—Your "Letters from Bialoleka" prove that it is possible to carry a dialogue across prison bars. You were not mistaken in your diagnosis when you wrote in April of last year that we face "a long march"—not "a sudden change." How do you see things developing from now on?

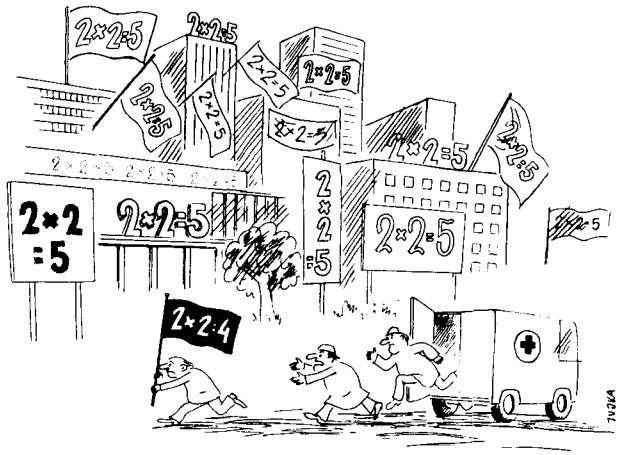
MICHNIK: I think there is no point in contemplating an accord with the present ruling team—it's a waste of time. That team may be struggling with what I call the Party "concrete" (the extreme hard-line fanatics); they can fly at each others' throats. But they agree on one thing: the only place for *Solidarity* in Poland is—behind bars. One has to understand the struggle that is going on in the power *Apparat*, but one must not entertain hopes with regard to any of the coteries. The only hope lies in building a broad, many-faceted front of civic action and in stubborn resistance. I am not a prophet, I don't know when and where the impulse will come for new changes. But change in the direction indicated by *Solidarity* is unavoidable. The existence of organised structures cannot be overestimated. They create a chance that this time the opportunity will not be wasted. But I think it really will be "a long march." This movement has to look ahead for years. It ought to pay particular attention to the situation in the Soviet Union. Upheavals there are even closer. Two virtues are most relevant today—on both sides of the bars—consistency and patience.

—You used to give lectures in the "Flying University", where you suggested that the tragedy of Poland's fate lay in the fact that despite the actions of Poles, Polish society was condemned to Sovietisation. What is there today, either in Poland or abroad, to incline you to an optimistic view?

MICHNIK: I am by nature an optimist. In order to involve oneself in anything you have to believe that things can be changed. If the optimists of the day—like Cardinal Wyszynski, Kisiel, Herbert—had not resisted, we would not have what we have today. For a society resistance always pays. Today Communism, as a social system and as an ideology, has exhausted its strength. It is a conservative dictatorship of a narrow élite—the "*Nomenklatura*." The process of struggle with its totalitarian structures has an international character and will become more powerful. We and the whole of the so-called "Socialist Camp" face either democratisation or a progressive decay and a possible war. We are working for democracy and peace. Jaruzelski, on the other hand, believes in the possibility of restoring traditional Communism by military means, where we will be his subjects and he a more-or-less benevolent monarch. This is a Utopia. He is a bigger utopian than Gierek. The realists, the authentic ones, are now in *Solidarity*.

—You were always opposed to conspiratorial activity. Now you have changed your point of view.

MICHNIK: The situation has changed. The underground leaders are indispensable. They are symbols of the whole national movement. I know how difficult life is for them and I am full of admiration. I know what dangers accompany life in the underground and I have written about it frankly in one of my "Letters from Bialoleka." But then we have no alternative—we have been thrust into the underground, along with the whole nation. In fact, everyone today is in the conspiracy. Let me remind you that in 1947, after appeals to come out of hiding after the amnesty, all the leaders of the Home Army [the wartime resistance] landed in jail once more. Jaruzelski will not give up until his "Local Operational Groups" have broken our moral backbone. That's why we must defend ourselves.



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—There's been an amnesty, and yet you remain in prison as one of the régime's hostages. How do you assess the amnesty and the lifting of Martial Law?

MICHNIK: It looks like one more comedy put on by the ruling team. I am happy, of course, that many individuals have been set free. I am particularly happy for those people who gave an example of how one should behave under interrogation and during a trial—for instance, Zofia Romaszewska. But what sort of an amnesty is it that leaves Frasyniuk and Bednarz in prison, or Slowik, Modzelewski, Gwiazda and Jurczyk? As for the lifting of Martial Law—this seems to be some sort of ritual gesture for the benefit of foreigners—and the badly informed ones at that. Nothing has changed for the better. Even artists, actors, and writers are a threat to the "social order" that Jaruzelski dreams of. Martial Law, we are told, was introduced to prevent a civil war. Now it appears that the spokesmen for that war are artists, actors, and writers. We've gone through that one before, in Stalin's time, and we know how it ends—in terror.

—What do you think of General Jaruzelski?

MICHNIK: I rarely think about him. His concept is to totalitarianise collective life for the lowest possible price. As regards the Russians, whom he would like to please, they aren't happy with him anyway.

—Why not?

MICHNIK: Because it's all too little for them. As long as they have not driven all the peasants into collective farms and the Catholic priests into the catacombs, the vision of counter-revolution will keep haunting them in their sleep. It's Moscow that stands behind the Party "concrete" and behind the attacks on the present team.

—Does that mean you believe Jaruzelski to be the lesser evil?

MICHNIK: I am as far as could be from such a line of reasoning. Jaruzelski is defending his own position, which he would not like to be deprived of by, say, Olszowski. What is that to us? With regard to *Solidarity* there is no difference in their attitude. The difference is one of technique. When I was being interrogated, one of the police officers yelled at me, threatened me with his fist, and told me I would rot in jail if I didn't make a statement. Then a second one came in and said: "For goodness sake, Major, why are you getting so agitated? Mr Michnik is a cultured and intelligent man. He will tell us everything without the shouting." The second man reasoned like Jaruzelski, the first like Olszowski. But both were officers of the Security Service and had the very same goal in mind.

—Are you afraid of being deported?

MICHNIK: Jacek Kuron has been told several times, lately too, that he can emigrate at any moment. I was also told the same. I am sure we are not exceptional in this place. Maybe Jaruzelski thinks this is a humanitarian gesture. After all, they could always shoot me for spying for, let's say, the Americans. Why not? The Polish judiciary is the most liberal in the world when it comes to interpreting evidence. But I am not interested in emigrating. It would be more useful for Poland if Jaruzelski, Olszowski and Kiszczak left instead. Life in this country suits me—even in prison. I prefer not to think about deportation. Polish criminal law does not envisage such a possibility; I am aware, though, that the authorities may be considering it. As long as we stay in prison no rational person will believe that "order reigns in Warsaw."

*—We feel ourselves to be your debtors. By leaving you in prison, the Communists have themselves shown whom they fear most and to whom we owe, most of all, that breath of fresh air that was August 1980. You can be sure that as long as you are in here we will always say "***Non possumus***" (as Cardinal Wyszynski did in the years of Stalinist terror). After such an amnesty Poland has been turned from a prison cell into a prison yard. We can either leave the prison and be free, or we can be thrust in here with you. But we will never let ourselves be taken out into the exercise yard. We will remember that August 1980 came about because of injustice and in defence of one person—Anna Walentynowicz.*

MICHNIK: Thank you for what you have said and for giving me the opportunity to have my say. We will try not to disappoint those who have put their trust in us—our friends on the other side of the wall. After all, when all is said and done, you are risking more than we are.

Compiègne

On the move you can choose between
The enclosed world of the train
And the window's continuous performance,
Parallel histories, with their own speeds,
A relativity regulated by rails
With connections at halts and stations.

But at this carriage, alone in the forest,
With its elegant table, the named places,
The desks and field telephones,
And where the signal is at halt always,
The points have changed
As we peer in from outside history.

John Cotton

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LETTERS

Peace & Freedom

WE THE UNDERSIGNED, being teachers in British Universities and Polytechnics, wish publicly to declare our opposition to the argument which the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and its allies have been presenting in British institutions of higher education.

It seems to us that the unilateralist campaigners have been selective in their use of facts and have sometimes sought to promote fear and hysteria over a complex issue of public policy. We believe we are not faced with a choice between surrender to the Soviet Union and a nuclear holocaust. The main task of statesmanship is precisely to avoid this choice. The case for maintaining the effective defence of Britain and the West through the retention of nuclear weapons is overwhelming unless and until we are able to reach a satisfactory agreement on measures of multilateral disarmament, and their verification, with the USSR.

The approach of organisations such as CND, far from promoting rational debate on such matters, has been to cast slurs upon the motives and moral sense of those who reject its case. The appropriation of the word "peace" by one side—as when CND calls itself "the Peace Movement"—suggests that the opposition to unilateralism implies the advocacy of war. Questions of the defence of the nation and the preservation of peace cannot be resolved by appeal to a false moralism that takes no account of the prevailing international circumstances. In particular, rational consideration must take account of the nature of the USSR and the special kind of threat it poses to the survival of the West as a community of free nations. We cannot accept the unilateralists' claim that the preservation of peace within Europe since 1945 can be dissociated from the West's willingness thus far to retain sufficient arms to deter Soviet expansion. We believe that the measures demanded by the CND, far from serving the cause of peace, would encourage aggressive tendencies endemic in the Soviet system.

We therefore stress the importance of open and rational discussion of these matters, confident that the causes of peace and freedom are best served by our continuing active participation in our international alliances and by rejection of all measures of one-sided disarmament.

JOHN VAIZEY (Lord Vaizey), Professor J. P. KENYON, Professor MICHAEL HOWARD, KENNETH MINOGUE, H. R. TREVOR-ROPER (Lord Dacre), Professor MARY HESSE, DAN JACOBSON, ANTHONY QUINTON (Lord Quinton), Professor DONALD MACRAE, The Rev. Professor J. R. PORTER, Professor RAPHAEL LOEWE, DOUGLAS EDEN, Professor JULIUS GOULD, CAROLINE COX (Lady COX), Professor Sir CHARLES FRANK, ROBERT BLAKE (Lord Blake), Professor DAVID MARTIN, ROGER SCRUTON, IAIN ELLIOT, Professor H. S. FERNS, Professor ANTONY FLEW, Professor R. L. GREGORY, Sir ALEC MERRISON (Vice-Chancellor) and members of the Science Department, University of Bristol, DAPHNE PARK (Principal, Somerville College, Oxford), Professor ALAN PEACOCK, PETER REDDAWAY, Professor B. C. ROBERTS, Professor LEONARD SCHAPIRO, Count NIKOLAI TOLSTOY, Professor EDWARD SHILS, Professor P. M. W. THODY, Professor HUGH SETON-WATSON, Professor DAVID REGAN, *et al.*

A Poet's Offering: or Lines for the Bottom Line

WHOEVER has been published by ENCOUNTER must be distressed by its fiscal woes. In the hope of renewed prosperity I offer the following verse:

Improvidence

Owe, do not own
What you can borrow
Live on each loan
Forget tomorrow
Why not be in debt
To one who can give
You whatever you need
It is good to abet
Another's good deed.

SAMUEL MENASHE

New York City

"Gandhi" & Amritsar

I SYMPATHISE WITH Sir Algernon Rumbold's attempt (March) to demythologise Attenborough's film *Gandhi*. "Perhaps", as he says, "films are an unsuitable medium for the portrayal of history." But how much more dependable is history itself?

He ends his corrective commentary on the film's interpretation of the Amritsar Massacre with the assertion, "the film is wrong in recording exchanges which imply that women and children were present at the monstrous deed." Is it? The many general histories do little more than give widely varying numbers of "people" shot (and Salman Rushdie in *Midnight's Children* is, perhaps surprisingly, no less reticent).

Ian Colvin in *The Life of General Dyer* (1929) asserts, "The assembly . . . was composed wholly of men" who were being incited by several speakers to further violence. Stanley Wolpert, on the other hand, in his widely used *A New History of India* (2nd ed., 1982, p.229) plays down the meeting's political significance: "Some ten thousand men, women, and children, mostly peasants from neighbouring villages, had come to the *bagh* (garden) to celebrate a Hindu festival." No hint here that it was a political meeting primarily, to which such people had become casually attached. But were any women?

In the most recent exhaustive study, Alfred Draper's *Amritsar: the Massacre that Ended the Raj* (1981) we do find details that refute Rumbold's and partly support Wolpert's account: "A boy of twelve lay with a dead baby in his arms. The corpses of many children littered the ground . . . among the dead were many peasants and their children who had come from outside villages to the Baisakhai fair." Do "peasants" here include women?

Dyer, in his official report to the General Staff, 16th Indian Division, wrote: "I did not see a single woman or child in the assembly." But, of course, it was chaos and he marched off without inspecting the casualties. Unfortunately, Mr Draper's account, though evidently based on intensive research (including meetings with eye-witnesses), is not footnoted. This was also the case in Rupert Furneaux's *Massacre at Amritsar* (1963), which includes frequent eye-witness references to the shooting of childen, though again—not women. The film, then, is perhaps not wrong; nor do historians seem to have got it quite right.

MICHAEL THORPE

Mount Allison University
Canada

Koestler

HYAM MACCOBY informs us: "Arthur Koestler was a Jew to his finger-tips, not only in physical appearance but in his whole habit of thought." It happens that I had occasion to study Arthur's finger-tips at length, while removing a sliver from his thumb, and I feel obliged to tell your readers that they were more Peruvian than Jewish: blunt, spatulate and nicotinish.

As for "physical appearance": what a foolish remark: Prince Charles looks much more Jewish-"looking" figures of our times? Pope looks Jewisher than my grandmother, who was the *doppelgänger* of Lady Marjorie in *Upstairs, Downstairs*. Who are the most Jewish- "looking" figures of our times? Pope John XXII, Joseph Goebbels, and Yasir Arafat.

The simple truth is that after so many centuries of pogroms, conversions, intermarriage and rapery, contemporary Jews "look" like Russians, Poles, Swedes. Tel Aviv bursts with males who look like Scotsmen and girls who remind you of Princess Diana. The most authentic "Aryan" face I ever saw belongs to Yehudi Menuhin; the most Jewish-"looking" American woman is Lady Bird Johnson.

Arthur Koestler, whom I hugely admired (and *liked*), "looked" more like a Turk or a Magyar than a Jew. Indeed, he looked far less Jewish than John Strachey or Hugh Gaitskell, who was the quintessential Litvak.

All this is impressionistic; statistics are more decisive: 58.7% of all Italians look "Semitic"; 52.4% of Frenchmen could pass as Jews; and 64.9% of all male Spaniards look as if they just came from *shul*. I can vouch for the purity of these figures, since I made them up myself—but only after long, systematic

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observation. Put it another way: Would it surprise you to learn that John Wayne was, and Rex Harrison and Dame Margot Fonteyn are, Jewish? It should; they are not.

I leave Arthur Koestler's "habit of thought" for another occasion. Voltaire, a bitter anti-Semite, was more "Jewish" in wit, irony, moral outrage and analytic brilliance than most rabbis of his day—or ours.

Yours faith(?)fully,
LEO ROSTEN

New York City

THE AMERICAN JOURNALIST who modified the famous tag to "*De mortuis nil nisi bunkum*" was wise in his generation; and I regret to remark that your obituary issue on Koestler induced feelings of acute nausea. By all means let us honour the memory of the author of *Darkness at Noon*, of a man who had the moral and physical courage to claim the right to die with dignity by his own choice; but at the same time, let us not forget that he proved himself in many ways a gullible and arrogant ass.

Having rid himself of one demonstrably false superstition, he spent the rest of his life looking for something else to believe in, and (of course) found it, in "the paranormal." On the way he wrote *The Case of the Midwife Toad* in order to demonstrate his crass ignorance of evolutionary biology, *The Roots of Coincidence* to demonstrate that he did not understand even elementary ideas of probability, and *The Act of Creation* to demonstrate that he could substitute high-sounding and prolix nothings for understanding.

We do not genuflect.

M. HAMMERTON

Department of Psychology
The University
Newcastle upon Tyne

AS MELVIN J. LASKY pointed out in the admirable interview on Koestler in the September/October ENCOUNTER, Koestler was "very different with different friends." All the more reason for pleasure at being able to agree with practically everything MJL said; and all the more pity for having to put him right on the point he made at the end.

The reason why the coffins did not "slip away" at the crematorium was not a mechanical failure but the fact that, as the executor responsible for the arrangements, I so ordained it. I have always thought the unaided disappearance of the coffin at a cremation through magically opened doors is theatrical, unnatural, and embarrassing. In this sad case, the Koestlers' friends would have had to stand through a repeat performance, for I was informed that the second coffin would have to be man-handled on to the plinth after the first had vanished. It seemed to me to be more fitting for the gathering of friends to take their leave without artificial ceremony.

The point is only worth making in order to forestall yet another unfounded Koestler legend.

HAROLD HARRIS

London

Ciceronian

D. J. ENRIGHT (July–August) cites Emerson: "The book written against fame and learning has the author's name on the title-page."

Did Emerson say he was englishing Cicero: "*Ipsi illi philosophi, in illis libellis quos de contemnenda gloria scribunt, nomen suum inscribunt*"?

No doubt Cicero had latined a Greek author.

MILTON HIMMELFARB

New York City

AUTHORS

A. S. Byatt was formerly Senior Lecturer in English and American Literature at University College, London. Her new novel, *Still Life*—her first since *The Virgin in the Garden* (1978)—will be published in 1984 by Chatto & Windus.

Zbigniew Brzezinski's article is based on an address given this year to the International Institute of Strategic Studies conference in Ottawa.

Michael Howard, Regius Professor of Modern History, University of Oxford, is the author of *Causes of War* (Temple Smith, 1982), *The Franco-Prussian War* (n.e. Methuen, 1981), *War in European History* (Oxford University Press, 1976), and *The Theory and Practice of War* (1965). His article first took the form of a Lewis Fry Memorial Lecture at the University of Bristol (May 1983). Among his contributions to ENCOUNTER are "The World of Henry Kissinger" (November 1982), "The Causes of War" (March 1982), and "Surviving a Protest: A Reply to E. P. Thompson" (November 1980).

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich).

David Cannadine is a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, where he is Lecturer and Director of Studies in History. He is the author of *Lords and Landlords: The Aristocracy and the Towns 1775–1967* (Leicester University Press, 1980) and co-editor of *Exploring the Urban Past* (Cambridge University Press, 1982).

John Grigg is the author of a two-volume biography (Eyre Methuen, 1973, 1978), *The Young Lloyd George* and *The People's Champion*, which won the 1978 Whitbread Award.

David Miles, Deputy Director of the Oxford Archaeological Unit and Archaeological Adviser to the National Trust, is the author of *The Upper Thames Valley* (1947) and *Introduction to Archaeology* (Ward Lock, 1978), and editor of the forthcoming *Archaeology at Barton Court Farm, Abingdon, Oxon.* (Council for British Archaeology).

John Mole's most recent book of poems is *Feeding the Lake* (Secker, 1981). He is co-editor of an anthology, *Poetry 1945–80*, published this year by Longman.

Sidney Hook is Emeritus Professor, New York University, and Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford, California. His numerous books form a wide span from one of his earliest works, *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* (1933) to the more recent *Philosophy and Public Policy* (S. Illinois University Press, 1980). Lewis Feuer's article "The Pragmatic Wisdom of Sidney Hook" appeared in the October 1975 issue of ENCOUNTER, and *Sidney Hook: Philosopher of Democracy and Humanism*, a *Festschrift* edited by Paul Kurtz, has recently been published by Prometheus Books, New York.

H. J. Eysenck is Professor of Psychiatry at the University of London and Director of the Psychological Department at the Maudsley Hospital. Among his many books are *I Do: Your Guide to a Happy Marriage* (Century, 1983), *Uses and Abuses of Psychology* (n.e. Penguin, 1970), and *The Scientific Structure of Personality* (1952).

Adam Michnik's "Letter from a Polish Prison" (© Adam Michnik 1983) and the interview with him (© *Tygodnik Mazowsze* and *Kultura* 1983) were published by the Information Centre for Polish Affairs (London) in their "Uncensored Poland" news bulletin, and first appeared in the Paris Polish-language monthly *Kultura*.

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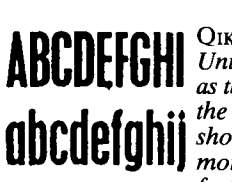
Life & Letters Today

Aberdeen



QIK LERNING: *Experts at Aberdeen University see new electronic technology as the medium for spreading a reform of the English language which would shorten words "to help the fluent read more quickly and slow readers learn faster."*

Since it was first standardised two centuries ago our mother tongue has survived the threat of bastardisation by slang and the merciless assault of Americanisms imported with the hundreds of television and radio programmes broadcast in increasing numbers today. In spite of this pressure we still call gas **petrol**, *freeways* **motorways**, *spell nite as* **night** *and wish our acquaintances* **good morning** *instead of exhorting them to "have a nice day."*

*But this jealous guardianship of our language will have all been in vain if Dr Valerie Yule of Aberdeen University has her way. The new short-word spelling "***wil eventualy afect al pepl's working and privat afairs and is alredy a tremendus breakthru***", she claims.*

The operators of such services as Prestel, Ceefax and Oracle could present more information in a way that would make it easier to digest and the system could be spread rapidly through new technology, she suggests. No doubt plans are already afoot to rewrite the works of Shakespeare (or would we say **Shaksper***). And doubtless it would work wonders for those trying to understand Shelley (***Shely***) just as it is sure to bring de Maupassant (***d'Mopasnt***) within everyone's reach. But why stop there? If we are really to use computer technology to the advantage of our language why not scrap words altogether and replace them with a series of numbers, adopting a similar system to that already used in some Chinese restaurants?*

YORKSHIRE POST

London

WHAT HO!: *The hunt is on for someone to translate P. G. Wodehouse's Bertie-babble into Swahili. This is one of the unfilled vacancies in a project conceived by enthusiasts to translate Wodehouse's story, "***The Great Sermon Handicap***," from* **The Inimitable Jeeves** *into as many languages as possible.*

Richard Usborne, who describes himself as dogsbody on the scheme, told me about it after a discussion with his Hebrew translator. "The story is all about the Anglican Church and horse-racing", he said, "and the Hebrew chap was a bit worried that the Israelis do not have either. Ancient Greek, Armenian and Bulgarian are well on the way, but the man in Papua New Guinea who is translating it into pidgin is proving rather slow."

THE TIMES

London

NON-FICTION: *It was hell in the public lending library. No human being could go on taking pressure like that. Slaving away at a 35-hour, four-day week . . . satisfying the insatiable demands of old-age pensioners for murder between hard covers . . . battling against the remorseless tide of overdue books. . . . Something had to snap.*

The librarians staged a go-slow against the stress. Such a story should only be found in the fiction department, on the shelves reserved for humour. But, in the London borough of Brent, it's fact.

Stress is said to have stricken 124 men and women because of under-staffing in 14 libraries run by the borough of Brent.

Employees—paid between £6,669 and £9,895—claim that their normal 35-hour week, spread over four days, is too much, causing 60 per cent absenteeism through sickness. So they are working 20 hours a week at five a day.

When Willesden Green eventually opened, the librarian suggested a number of titles on this controversial subject, among them "Stress in Industry," which, according to its own foreword, is "quite the best analysis." It failed, however, to shed any light on the strains of being a librarian.

DAILY MAIL

Dachau

NOMEN ET OMEN: *It is 50 years since the Nazis established their first concentration-camp, at Dachau some 18 kilometres from Munich. Although it was never a "death camp" (with gas chambers), the casualty list of prisoners was high, due to beatings, shootings, hangings, starvation, and medical experiments.*

For the last 17 years the Mayor of Dachau, Lorenz Reitmeier, has been struggling valiantly in order to improve the image of his town of 34,000 inhabitants. It has evidently been a hopeless task. "It's very difficult to change the firm attitudes of so many hundreds of millions in East and West who've heard of Dachau", he says. He sought for years in the European twin-city programme to find a French partner—in vain. "With our name it just won't work. . . ."

LINZER VOLKSBLATT

Carlisle

DEATHLESS PROSE: *Speaking at Carlisle during the Penrith by-election, Mr Neil Kinnock, strongly favoured for the leadership of the Labour Party, extruded some amazing verbal material which should not be allowed to perish [Peter Simple writes].*

Questioned on differences between himself and Mr Hattersley he is reported to have said:

> **"It is an implacable, 14 carat, tungsten-line principle that there is no action more necessary or justifiable than to contribute continually to secure victory for the Labour Party at the next General Election."**

Even allowing for possible misprints, this is a staggering example of gaseous rhetoric. Can a principle be implacable? Well, just. "Tungsten-line" for "hardline" is wonderfully far-fetched. "14 carat" is less than half the measure of pure gold, which is 24 carat.

The "principle" itself is dubious. Is to "contribute continually to secure victory for the Labour Party" more necessary or justifiable than to rescue a child from drowning? Discuss.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Westminster

UNDERWHELMING: **A dictionary definition of "overwhelming" is "crushing or immersing", and Mr Eric Heffer is the latest politician grossly to misuse this word. It is usually applied by IRA supporters to the 3% of votes obtained in Northern Ireland by Sinn Fein.**

Mr Heffer has now joined Mr Scargill in claiming that "the country voted overwhelmingly against the Conservatives." The country did nothing of the kind. It voted 13m for the Conservatives, against 8m for Labour, 4m for Liberals, and 3m for SDP. This divided opposition certainly did not *overwhelm* **the Conservatives.**

THE TIMES

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